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THE NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY ORATIONS



THE
NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY
ORATIONS

ADDRESSES SERMONS AND POEMS DELIVERED BEFORE
THE NEW ENGLAND SOCIETY IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK
1820–1885

COLLECTED AND EDITED BY

CEPHAS BRAINERD

AND

EVELINE WARNER BRAINERD

PUBLISHED FOR THE SOCIETY

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DISCOURSE

OF

JONATHAN PRESCOTT HALL

1847





JONATHAN PRESCOTT HALL

(1796-1863.)

THE speaker at the anniversary held at the Tabernacle in 1847 was the eminent lawyer J. Prescott Hall. He was of Puritan ancestry, a native of New England, a graduate of Yale, bred to the Connecticut bar, and a member of the legislature of that State. For a time he dropped his profession, turning to manufacturing interests. Being called to argue a case in connection with these before the Supreme Court of the United States, his abilities so impressed the opposing counsel, Mr. Webster, that he inquired where Mr. Hall was practising. On learning that his adversary had given up the bar for manufacture, Mr. Webster said: "Young man, you have too much talent to waste it in greasing cotton-spindles."

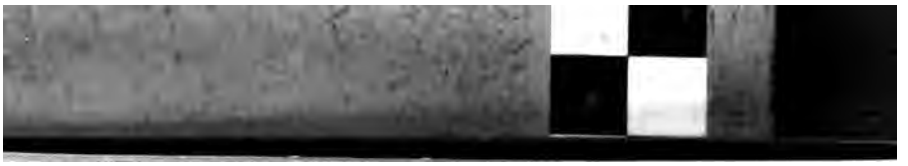
Thus influenced, Mr. Hall entered into partnership with his brother, David Priestly Hall, then in practice in New York. Later, J. Prescott Hall became the partner of Charles Butler, and subsequently of William M. Evarts. From the administration of President Taylor, Mr. Hall received the office of District Attorney for the Southern District of New York. He was a man of brilliant mental powers and of splendid presence. From a short sketch by Rowland Hall, Esq., is quoted the following description. "As a lawyer, without great application he easily reached and held his position as a leader of the bar; possessed of great nimbleness both of mind and speech, he shone greatly as a speaker even in that day of great orators. He was honest, sincere, the foe of hypocrisy, and full of a sarcastic wit, from which pretence of every kind recoiled abashed."

DISCOURSE

TO trace the rise and progress of communities; to follow the fortunes and elucidate the character of those who have laid the foundation of new associations; to preserve from decay the memory of illustrious men, who have transferred from one hemisphere to another, the arts of peace, the blessings of liberty, and the consolations of religion; belong perhaps, to the province of history, rather than to a brief address, upon a special occasion. And yet, we who are now assembled, may with strict propriety, and not without a sense of just pride, cast our eyes back upon the events of the last two centuries, while we contemplate the ancestry from which we are sprung, and the causes which have led to our being here, this day, to present our grateful offerings upon the altar of our national existence.

"Difficilis est (says the learned Grotius,) rerum gestarum narratio: quæ absentem, fugiunt; presentem, trahunt." It is difficult to give a correct narrative of events; they escape the observation of those who were not witnesses; while those who were present, are drawn away by their force, or become parties in the scene.

But the story of our origin, as a people, is not obscure. We are not compelled, like other nations, to trace back our race through rude ages of barbarism, to the dim uncertainty of tradition and fable. The foundations of society in New England and the origin of its



Institutions, both civil and religious, may be correctly ascertained; for their history has been written and published to the whole world.

In the mythology of the ancient Greeks, the Goddess of Wisdom is fabled to have sprung into existence from the head of Jupiter, completely armed and all perfect. In like manner, the first settlements of New England came into being, as communities, with all the attributes of organized society, and all the restraints of good government and subordination.

The day which we now celebrate, is a memorable one, in the annals of our country; a day never to be forgotten or disregarded. If the fourth of July, 1776, was, in the estimation of the patriotic John Adams, a memorable epoch, to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, to be solemnized with pomp, shows, bonfires and illuminations, from one end of the continent to the other, how much more is the 22d of December, 1620, which marks the period when the national existence of New England began, to be held in remembrance by us and our successors, "from that time forward forever!"

We are here assembled, Gentlemen of the New England Society, to celebrate this great occasion. To say to those who have gone before us, if in the mysterious ties which bind the present and the past together, such communications can be held, that we have not forgotten the days of their labor and sorrow; that the history of their perilous fortunes has not been blotted out, nor that of their self-devotion gone into oblivion; that their children, grateful for the sacrifices which they endured, full of admiration at their example, proud of a descent from such illustrious progenitors, year by year assemble themselves together to commemorate the great events of past centuries, that their fathers' names may not be forgotten or lost from among men.

This Society, of which we are members, was not founded upon narrow, or sectional predilections. Having its beginning in wise and generous purposes, its chief object is, and ever has been, to connect the natives of New England and their descendants with the early history of their country; that, by the considerations of a common ancestry, the emotions of a natural sympathy might be excited, and the bonds of union strengthened; and thus, that the descendants of those, who braved the same dangers, to attain the same ends, might be led to kindly thoughts of one another; and finally to kindly acts and benevolent associations.

We do not arrogate to ourselves, or assert for ourselves, any superiority over the inhabitants of any other part of the country, either in the manner of our origin, or in our progress towards maturity. Conceding to all sections of the Union a beginning equally as respectable, a progress equally honorable, and a present condition quite as prosperous as our own, we, nevertheless, have a right, without offence to others, to consider our family relations, and as the children of common parents, to assemble ourselves together, on an occasion like the present, and look back with grateful remembrance upon those who, through peril, hardship and privation, subdued the wilderness for our benefit and laid here the foundations of law, order and religion so broad and deep, that we may erect superstructures upon them, massive and high, without endangering the solid basis beneath.

Look back upon the origin of the first settlements of New England, and tell me in what annals, other than our own, can you find the history of a people, who, surrounded at home by the comforts of social life; suffering no intolerable evils from the tyranny of government; weighed down by no excessive burthens;

untempted by prospects of gain; unswayed by the lust of conquest; abandoned, nevertheless, all that home, kindred and country could offer, for the sole purpose of enjoying an unrestrained liberty of thinking and acting upon the great rights of conscience, free from the domination of ecclesiastical control. Look at them assembled upon the shores of their native, their beautiful Island, prepared to undergo all the hardship and perils of voluntary exile! Whose cheek blanches; whose eye grows dim as they look upon the waste of waters which shuts them out from the distant and unknown shores? Why should they leave this pleasant land? Why should they desert their tranquil homes? What dire necessity drives them forth? It is not poverty goading the Irishman to fairer scenes and more fruitful climes; it is not the Pole, scourged forth by the iron whip of a military tyranny; nor the blue-eyed German, escaping from the grinding exactions of a toilsome and hopeless, because unrewarded labor.

No, none of these motives impels or drives them forward: but they are drawn by an impulse more powerful than the love of home, or parents, or country. It is the still small voice of conscience, which tells them of a duty higher and purer and holier than all these; and in obedience to its dictates, they must go forth to worship the God of their fathers in the wilderness.

"It is not the least debt" (says Sir Walter Raleigh,) "we owe unto history, that it hath made us acquainted with our dead ancestors, and delivered us their memory and fame. Besides, we gather out of it a policy no less wise than eternal, by the comparison and application of other men's fore-passed mercies with our own like errors and ill-deservings."

The history of our ancestors is indeed of inestimable worth to their descendants; though by it, our "ill-de-

servings" may, perhaps, stand out in more prominent relief against their fore-past mercies. But their example remains for all time to come. Simple, unpretending, high-minded and pure of purpose, the Pilgrims of New England went forth for great objects, to be attempted at first by inconsiderable means.

And who composed this devoted band, these Pilgrims in the desert? Were they an ignorant and fanatical sect, enticed from their homes by ambitious leaders, taking advantage of a newly-awakened religious enthusiasm, for the accomplishment of their own selfish objects? or were they educated and well-informed men, of large experience, prudent, sagacious and wise?

The early settlers of Plymouth, Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Haven, (for at the first, these Colonies were separate and independent jurisdictions,) numbered among their ranks many individuals eminent for their learning, and distinguished by their personal condition. Mr. Carver, the first Governor of Plymouth, was a gentleman well known, and of elevated character, who originally had a good estate in England; but being among the earliest emigrants to Leyden and America, and one of their principal agents, he liberally used his fortune for the benefit of his associates; setting a most illustrious example of patience, self-denial and generosity, through long years devoted to the good of others, and the advancement of that cause, for which he staked, and finally sacrificed, his life. William Bradford, a name never to be mentioned without honor by a descendant of the Pilgrims, although in some degree a self-taught scholar, was nevertheless familiar with the Dutch and French languages, and attained to a considerable intimacy with the Latin and Greek. But that he might "see the ancient oracles of God in their native beauty," he applied

himself, in his leisure moments, to the study of Hebrew; and through his whole life was much devoted to literary pursuits; although he inherited a good landed property from his father, and was educated for the manly employments of agriculture; yet, in his early youth, having his mind deeply impressed with its responsibilities to a higher power, he passed over to Holland to join the little band of non-conformists who had chosen an asylum there against the ecclesiastical tyranny of King James. Mr. Cotton, one of the most learned men of his time, was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he was eminently distinguished for his scholastic attainments. He wrote Latin with elegance, was a critic in Greek, and so well skilled in the Hebrew tongue that he could discourse in that language. Brewster, the steadfast and devout elder, who, in the midst of want, if not absolute famine, gave thanks to God that his family were permitted "to suck of the abundance of the seas, and of the treasures hid in the sand," also educated at the University of Cambridge, was at one time connected with the British Embassy in Holland. Higginson was a graduate from Emanuel College. Eaton and Hopkins had been eminent merchants in London. Mr. Davenport, a student of Oxford, and a minister of great fame at home, was also a distinguished scholar, eminent alike for learning and virtue. Edward Winslow, the brave man who offered himself as a hostage for his Colony in their first interview with the savage monarch of Mount Hope, possessed both fortune and information. In his travels on the Continent of Europe, becoming acquainted with Mr. Robinson, he adopted his sentiments and finally joined the emigrants who came to Plymouth; and after performing for them the most signal services, in the midst of great and boldly encountered dangers, he at last

laid down his life for his country in that unfortunate expedition fitted out by Cromwell against the Spaniards in the West Indies. Mr. Hooker, a most eloquent divine, and one of the founders of the Colony of Connecticut, was educated at Cambridge in England. His command of language was so great, that, like Whitfield, he usually delivered his discourses without reference to notes; while his expressive countenance and personal demeanor, added a majesty to his presence, which commanded at once the respect and admiration of his hearers. Mr. Stone, at one time an associate with Mr. Hooker, and a graduate of the same University, was one of the most accurate logicians of his day, celebrated not only for acuteness, but also for wit, humor and pleasantry. And it may be here observed, that many of the learned persons whose names are now mentioned, have left to their posterity most striking evidences of their attainments, in the various works for which they were, in their own times, particularly distinguished. Winthrop, a name prolific in illustrious men—a gentleman of education and bred to the law, inherited from his ancestors an estate of six hundred pounds a year: an income, which would be accounted even in these less frugal days, quite competent to maintain the condition in which he was born. Eminent himself, he transmitted his name and fame, through two chief magistrates of Connecticut, son and grandson; and finally, the same blood coming down to a Lieutenant-Governor of Massachusetts, flows, through him, in the veins of the distinguished representative from Boston, who now presides over the popular branch of the American Congress. In one word—not to swell the long catalogue—if we look at the whole body of the emigrants by the Mayflower and Speedwell, the Arbella, the Ambrose, the Talbot and the Jewel, we can

nowhere find names more eminent for prudence and forecast, or more remarkable for intelligence, enterprise and courage. If Lord Chatham, while speaking of the renowned Patriots of our Independence, could say, that he never had heard or read of any body of men superior to the Congress at Philadelphia, what may we not say of those, who, on the bleak shores of New England, in the midst of the desolations of winter, surrounded by perils and want, could, nevertheless, so far subdue themselves to the elements, and the elements to them, as not to venture forth from the dreary prison of their ship, until they had combined themselves together for their better order and preservation, by framing a general law for the good government of the Colony? And this too in the most perfect spirit of liberty and equality.

In what other records of man's history do you find such evidences of just subordination, and solemn purpose; such moral and such Christian elevation? The very name by which they designated themselves is significant of their character, and marks at once their courage and humility. "And the time being come (says Governor Bradford,) that they must depart, they were accompanied to a town, sundry miles off, called Delft Haven, where the ship lay ready to receive them. So they left that goodly and pleasant City which had been their resting-place near twelve years. But they knew they were PILGRIMS, and looked not much on those things, but lifted up their eyes to Heaven, their dearest country, and quieted their spirits!"

What words of pathos and simplicity! They knew they were Pilgrims, and looked not much on those things! Yes, they were indeed Pilgrims. Pilgrims bound on no ordinary journey, to lay the foundation of no ordinary society, to establish a name not soon to fade away; for while admiration of purity and excellence

shall endure, so long as respect for departed worth shall remain among their descendants, so long shall the name of "*Pilgrim*" be honored and revered.

Among the many remarkable qualities with which Providence, for its own wise ends, seems to have endued the character of our ancestors, I know of none more striking or admirable than their love of order, and their submission to those just restraints whereby society is held together, property respected, personal security guarded, and public liberty preserved.

From the very first, the necessity for such submission was apparent to their minds. Recollect, that before they left the ship which had conveyed them safely across the boisterous waves of the Atlantic, borne up in the "hollow of that hand" which never ceased to support them, they projected, formed and signed, the first compact for liberal government, under equal laws, of which we have any record.

No men ever understood better than they, the proper foundations of republican government, or the just principles by which alone true liberty and equality can be maintained. "The best part of a community," said Governor Winthrop, in a letter to the people of Connecticut, "is always the least; and of that least, the wiser are still less." "There is," said he on another occasion, "a liberty of corrupt nature, which is inconsistent with authority, impatient of restraint, the enemy of truth and peace, and all the ordinances of God are bent against it. But there is a civil, a moral, a *federal* liberty, which consists in every one's enjoying his property and having the benefit of the laws of his country; a liberty of that only which is just and good; *for* THIS *liberty, you are to stand with your lives.*"

Wise legislator of the old time, just, sagacious and true! did your prophetic gaze pierce forward two cen-

turies to our times, for this picture of democratic freedom; to view and describe a liberty of corrupt nature, inconsistent with authority, impatient of restraint, the enemy of truth and peace? If haply, you should have beheld such scenes in your vision, and turned your eyes from the prospect, dim and suffused with tears, look once again, and you shall yet behold the better portion of your descendants, "standing with their lives," for that liberty, which is just and good, which gives to every one the enjoyment of his own property, and the benefit of the laws of his country.

It should not be forgotten, perhaps, that when the project for the settlement of New England was first entertained the state of public sentiment in the land of our ancestors began to be favorable to the commencement of such an enterprise. It was at the close of the reign of James the First, when men's minds were agitated by new views of their rights and privileges. The iron sway of the last Henry had been in some measure forgotten, while that of his stern and lion-hearted daughter had lost a large portion of its influence, during the weak and undignified, yet assuming administration of the learned, but contemptible, Scottish king. His subjects had at this period, begun to think for themselves. The reforms of Luther had spread their influence beyond the sea and over the land. The bigotry of Papal power was not able to subdue or keep down the awakened spirit of inquiry. A deep sense of religious obligation, in a large class of English thinkers, had taken the place of forms and masses, of indulgences and dispensations. The accountability of man, as an individual, had become impressed upon the minds of the devout and reflecting. Although the time for the enjoyment of religious freedom in their *own* land had not yet come, yet the waves of public opinion had begun to

move and heave in a manner which indicated that the great internal power which caused the agitation, could not long be pent up or restrained. When a true religious sentiment takes possession of the soul, it becomes superior to all other considerations. A sympathetic communication extends the feeling from mind to mind and from heart to heart. In the depth of its fervor all other objects are comparatively forgotten. The strength of kings, the influence of forms, and the rewards of obedience to power, have lost their influence. The soul becomes poised upon itself. Not dreading its obligation *to men*, while those of a paramount nature are before it, it cuts aloof from all worldly considerations, and "holds itself responsible only to its God."

That this sentiment was the exciting cause of the first removal of our ancestors to Holland, and of their subsequent emigration to New England, has been conceded by most historians who have written upon the subject, and may be assumed as the basis of all our speculations upon those extraordinary movements commenced by the independent churches on the other side of the Atlantic. Indeed it has been supposed, and not unfrequently asserted, that the first settlers at Plymouth, went thither, for the exclusive purpose of enjoying their religious opinions and practices in their own way, unmolested by civil control, or ecclesiastical domination. That this was the *first* object of those who left England, and passed over to Holland, in 1608, is undoubtedly true; but that it was their *only* motive for leaving Holland, and coming to New England, cannot well be; for from the moment when the reformation of Luther had taken permanent hold of the Low Countries, in the year 1573; from that moment, the Dutch, with a wise policy, granted a free, absolute and uncontrolled liberty of conscience, to all religions and all



sects; so that the Non-Conformist of England could there meet the Catholic of Spain, the Jew of Syria, and the Pagan of heathen lands, upon the equal platform of free toleration. So far, then, as liberty of *conscience* was concerned, there was no cause of complaint in Holland. The free exercise of every man's religious opinions and practices, was thoroughly guarded; and the church of Mr. Robinson might have remained safely in Leyden, if their only desire had been to worship the God of their fathers, in their own mode, and according to the dictates of their own consciences. Indeed the liberality of Dutch sentiment, in this behalf, was such as to excite the ridicule of their neighbors, who intimated that their tolerance was the effect, not of liberal principles acting upon religious subjects, but of an indifference towards religion itself, in all its forms and in every aspect. Amsterdam was denominated by Bishop Hall, a "common harbour of all opinions;" others called it "a cage for unclean birds," to which "all strange religions flocked." And Beaumont and Fletcher introduce a pedant in one of their plays as saying: "I am a schoolmaster, sir, and would fain confer with you about erecting four new sects of religion at Amsterdam."

What then were the causes which first moved the Pilgrims in Holland to cast their eyes towards the setting sun, with the design of establishing new institutions in an unknown country, remote, barbarous and wild? What feelings were those which swelled in the hearts of those conscientious and brave men, to encounter hardship in all its forms, disease, famine and death, with their wives and children, among savage tribes, on rock-bound shores?

Doubtless, the religious sentiment was the controlling and first moving cause; but it seems not to have

been the only one;—for, as I have before observed, if the free enjoyment of their own religion in their own way, was the sole motive, then there was no reason for leaving Holland, where their persons, their property and opinions, were absolutely protected by the law of that land. They left England, it is true, for this one cause; but they left Holland for that and for other causes, which the Pilgrims themselves have set forth, in their own language, so that they might be known of all men, and respected by their descendants. I repeat again, that the first and leading motive; that which lay at the foundation of all their designs and actions, was the religious sentiment and feeling, which glowed in their hearts, and imparted an energy to their conduct, unknown to common men, unfelt by ordinary minds. But there was also a feeling of human misery, as strangers in a strange land; a yearning after kindred associations, and a love of their own country, which no exile among a strange people could subdue, no absence could make them forget, no estrangement by time could overcome. Hear the reasons for their enterprise, assigned by one who was with them from the beginning, and knew all their designs and all their motives.

"They had come," says Governor Bradford, "to a country where they saw many goodly cities, strongly walled, and filled with armed men;" but they heard, also, "a strange and uncouth language," and beheld manners and customs, so far differing from the villages wherein they were born, and bred, and had so long lived, that it seemed to them as if they were come into a new world. But these were not things which much took up their thoughts, for they had other work on hand; and it was not long before they saw the grim and grisled face of poverty coming upon them, like an armed man, with whom they must buckle and encounter,



and from whom they could not fly. After having lived in Holland about eleven or twelve years, in the agitation of their thoughts, and after much discourse, they began to incline to the conclusion of removal to some other place, not out of any new fangledness, or other such like giddy humour, by which men are sometimes transported, but for sundry weighty and solid reasons.

And first; they found by experience, the hardness of the place and country to be such, that few would come to them, and fewer abide with them; for many that came and desired to remain, could not endure the great labor they were contented to undergo. So severe, indeed, were their sufferings, that many who desired to enjoy the ordinances of God in their purity, and the liberty of the Gospel with them, yet preferred prisons in England, rather than liberty in Holland, with these afflictions. But it was thought that if a better and easier place of living could be had, it would take away these discouragements.

Secondly; they saw that, although the people generally bore their difficulties with cheerfulness and courage, while in the best of their strength, yet old age had begun to come on some, which was hastened before its time by their great and continued labors; and it was seen, that within a few years, they must, of necessity, sink under their burthens, or be scattered before them. Adopting, therefore, the proverb, that a "wise man seeth the plague when it cometh, and hideth himself," so they, like skilful and beaten soldiers, fearful of being surrounded by their enemies, unable to fight or fly, thought it better to dislodge betimes to some place of better advantage and less danger, if any such could be found.

Thirdly; as necessity was a task-master over them, so they were forced to be such to their servants and chil-

dren, which did not only wound the hearts of many a loving father and mother; so it produced many sad and sorrowful effects. For the children, although willing to bear a part of the burthen of their parents, were oftentimes so oppressed with their heavy labors, that, although their minds were free and willing, yet their bodies became decrepit in their early youth; the vigor of nature being consumed, as it were, in the very bud. But what was more lamentable, and, as they said, of all sorrows most heavy to be borne, was, that many of their children were drawn away by evil examples of the Dutch into dangerous courses; some becoming soldiers, others taking upon them far voyages by sea, or other causes tending to dissoluteness; so that they saw that their posterity would be in danger to degenerate and be corrupted; wherefore, considering how hard the country was where they lived; how many, having spent their estate, were forced to return to England; how grievous it was to live from under the protection of the State of England; how like they were to lose their language and their English name; how unable they were to give to their children such education as they themselves had received—they conceived that if God would be pleased to discover some place unto them, even though in America, and give them so much favor with the King and State of England as to have their protection there, where they might enjoy like liberty, and show by example, their tender countrymen, no less burdened than themselves, where they might live and comfortably subsist, free from anti-Christian bondage, keeping their name and nation, and be a means, not only to enlarge the dominions of their native State, but the Church of Christ also; they thought they might more glorify God, do more good to their country, better provide for their posterity, and live to be more re-



freshed by their labors, than they ever could in Holland. And last, though not least, to use their own language, "they had great hope and inward zeal of laying some good foundation for the propagating and advancing the Gospel of the kingdom of Christ, in those remote parts of the world."

These were the reasons assigned by the Pilgrims themselves for the great and perilous enterprise of exploring and settling a new world. Nor let it be thought that the dangers to be encountered, the hardships to be endured, and the difficulties to be overcome, were not present to their minds and imaginations. "The places upon which their eyes were bent," says Governor Bradford, "were some of those unpeopled countries of America, which are fruitful and fit for habitation; where there were only savage and brutish people, which range up and down, little otherwise than the wild beasts." But when these propositions were made public, the doubting were alarmed and the timid dismayed, alleging things neither unreasonable nor improbable: as that it was a great design, subject to inconceivable perils and dangers; then the length of the voyage, which the weak bodies of men and women, bowed down by age and toil, could never endure; the miseries also, to which they would be exposed in the new found country from famine, want and nakedness, and the yet greater dangers among a people represented to them as "barbarous, savage, cruel and treacherous: furious in their rage, merciless in their conquests: not content to take away life merely, but delighting to torment men, by flaying them alive, and broiling them on coals." And surely, these things could not but move the brave, and make the timid "to quake and tremble." To these were added, the precedents of ill success in like designs, with the remembrance of the hardships endured in Holland,

upon their first removal thither. For the abortive attempts to plant in other parts of the country, were well known to the emigrants; so much so, that they were described as being "like the habitations of the foolish, cursed before they had taken root."

And what answer could be given to objections so obvious and formidable? Who could observe the perils of the voyage, and yet conceal the hardships to be endured, or chase away the visions of hostile savages surrounding the feeble adventurers, upon their first landing? Nothing like this was attempted; but in bold and manly language they proclaimed that all great and honorable actions were accompanied by difficulties, and must be overcome by answerable courage. The dangers were admitted to be great, but not desperate; the difficulties many, but not invincible; and that all of them, through the help of God, might be borne, or overcome, by fortitude and patience.

True it was, that such attempts were not to be made, but upon good ground and reason; not rashly, or lightly, for curiosity or the hope of gain. Their ends, they said, were good; their calling lawful and urgent; and therefore, they might expect the blessing of God in their proceedings: "yea, although they should lose their lives in this action, yet that they might have comfort in the same, and their endeavors would be honorable."

Honorable, indeed, were their endeavors; and thrice honored be their names and memories, who were actuated by such high purposes, and sustained by such brave perseverance.

It will be observed here, with what natural simplicity they describe their feelings and disclose their motives of action; and among them, one, not the least observable, is their love of home, language and coun-



try! That mysterious tie, which binds men to the land of their birth; that innate sympathy with the accents of our early days, which neither time nor distance can destroy; that yearning after kindred associations, which will not be denied; that homesickness of the heart, when banished from the scenes of its youth and affections, which not even the great Roman orator could endure; these, all these, are most observable in the character and feelings of our ancestors.

They lived in Holland, "as men in exile and in a poor condition." But they seem to have felt as if their banishment were removed, if again they could be placed in connection with their native country, and under the protection of its power. On those western shores, to which they had turned their eyes, they would be objects of solicitude to their distant friends and relatives. Subjects of the same king, obedient to the same parliament, they would be Englishmen still, though Englishmen in a distant land. Their habitations might indeed be changed, but their country would remain the same. Exiles no more, for they were a part of the British Empire; and the flag which floated over their heads was the same banner which had waved on the fields of their fathers' fame. "May not," exclaims Governor Bradford, "and ought not, the children of these fathers rightly say, 'our fathers were Englishmen which came over the great ocean, and were ready to perish in this wilderness'?"

Our ancestors were proud of their nation, and they could not suffer the ties which bound them to the spot where they were born to be entirely severed. Englishmen by birth; Englishmen they would live and die. The sun, when he rose, came from their native land, and had warmed its soil by his early beams. The stars of night had been gazed upon by them under the broad

canopy of heaven, while standing by the doors of their fathers; and their relatives and friends in a far-distant land, would breathe a prayer for their safety and success as members still of the same great family; and thus their nationality itself would be preserved.

Then again, the language of their youth would not be forgotten or lost, but would be preserved and extended far and wide, over new and boundless regions; and this, too, was a matter of pleasing anxiety to them.

And which of us of New England origin, now here assembled, is there, who is not ready to thank those wise and thoughtful men, for the great gift of that noble tongue, in which our mothers first taught us to speak? Who would not lament if it had been confounded and lost in the hard jargon of Holland? Who would alter it, that he might "babble a dialect of France?" Who would change its terse and manly accents for the soft voice of Italy, or the sonorous periods of Spain? No; if we—

> "Would delight our private hours
> With music or with poem, where so soon
> As in our native language, can we find
> That solace?"

Language of Shakspeare and of Milton! Language of the Pilgrims! Having sounded its loud alarums in the great cause of freedom on its native shores, from the tongues of Burke, of Fox, and of Chatham, it has been echoed across the Atlantic and poured out in thunders from the lips of Webster, of Clay, and Calhoun! Language of free-born men! It has fixed its abode upon this western continent, here to remain, and advance, and spread out, until its voice shall have been heard in every valley and on every hill-top, between the



rising and the setting sun. Nor shall its sounds cease to echo and vibrate in its new abode, while man shall retain the power of self-government, and the love of liberty be cherished in his bosom.

Observe, also, the great forecast of our ancestors in their anxiety to give their children that education which should fit them to be Englishmen, speaking the English language, protected by English laws, and enjoying English liberty. All these were precious in their eyes; and if they could have but one privilege more, the liberty of enjoying the forms of their own religion in their own way; then, though seas were put between them and their native land, they were no longer exiles, no longer wanderers without a home, without a country.

In pursuance of this design, they procured the principal Secretary of State, "to move his Majesty, King James, by a private motion, to give way to such a people, who could not so comfortably live under the government of another State, to enjoy their liberty of conscience under his gracious protection in America, where they would endeavor the advancement of his Majesty's dominions, in the enlargement of the Gospel by all due means." This, his Majesty said was a good and honest motive; and asking what profits might arise in the part they intended 'twas answered, "fishing." To which he replied with his ordinary asseveration, "So God have my soul, 'tis an honest trade, 'twas the Apostles' own calling."

Upon this hint, for the pedantic trifler would not in plain terms grant the favor thus sought, they obtained from the Virginia Company that patent, which furnished the title under which our ancestors undertook the greatest enterprise in the annals of their race.

This Company, it appears, was ready to grant them

a patent with ample privileges, and was desirous that they should undertake the expedition; "but the King would only connive at them," says Bradford; "he would not molest them if they carried themselves peaceably, but he would not tolerate them, by public authority, under his seal." Although not satisfied with this Royal manifestation of kindness, they concluded, nevertheless, to act upon it, considering, that "if there was no security in the promise thus intimated, there would be no greater certainty in a further confirmation of it. For if afterwards there should be a purpose or desire to wrong them, though they had a seal as broad as the house-floor, it would not serve the turn, for there would be means enough found to recall or reverse it."

With these resolutions, and under this title, they embarked. But would it give them a fair right to take possession of lands in other regions, by a deed from a Company which had itself obtained its title under a grant from the crown? Upon this subject you must permit me to make a few remarks in defence of the first settlers of New England; as their occupation of a territory, partially in possession of another race, has been a theme for much reproach upon them, and their sense of justice.

In the first place, it may be observed, that at the time of the early settlements, it was the universal opinion among Europeans, that the discovery of a new country inhabited by races of uncivilized men, gave to the first discoverers an inchoate right of control over it; and upon this foundation lay all the English, French, Spanish, and Portuguese grants.

Indeed, this is the doctrine of modern times, and has on a late and momentous occasion, been the subject of critical examination by two powerful nations, almost in the attitude of war. The whole controversy con-

cerning Oregon turned upon the question of discovery and of formal possession, for neither England, nor Spain, nor the United States, had ever occupied the territory to any considerable extent. Indeed, the Supreme Court of the United States, with that great jurist, Judge Marshall, at its head, decided not many years ago, that all our land titles in this country, are founded upon grants made by the nations who claimed to have been the first discoverers, and not upon those issued by the Pope, with a liberal hand, to his Catholic children.

The Northern Continent of America was discovered, as you all well know, in the year 1497, by John Cabot, a Portuguese mariner, then in the service of Henry the VII. of England: and this discovery being carried out by Gosnold, Hudson and Smith, enabled the English crown to claim certain portions of it, as subject to colonization and grant, agreeably to the then received notions of title. Capt. John Smith, of famous memory, having in the year 1614, ranged along the coast of New England, from Penobscot to Cape Cod, formed a map of the country, which he presented to King James. The impression at that time, and for a considerable period afterwards, was, that this part of the country, so full of unexplored bays and jutting headlands, was an island: and it was thought to resemble the mother country, both in soil and climate, so much, that Smith bestowed upon it the name of New England; which name Prince Charles afterwards graciously confirmed. The country itself was described by one of the early writers, as being like England in many particulars: somewhat the same "for heat and cold in summer and winter, champagne ground, but not high mountainous; full of vales and meadow ground, of rivers and sweet springs, as England is. But principally, as far as we

can yet find, it is an island, and near about the same quantity of England, being cut out from the mainland in America, as England is from the main of Europe, by a great arm of the sea, which entereth in forty degrees, and runneth up northwest and by west, and goeth out either into the South Sea or else into the Bay of Canada." The Indians also had the same impression, confidently affirming that either the Dutch or French passed through from sea to sea between Plymouth and Virginia.

"North America," says the historian, Hubbard, "is, as to its nativity, of the same standing with her two elder sisters, Peru and Mexico, yet was suffered to lie in its swaddling-clothes one whole century of years; nature having promised no such dowry of rich mines of silver and gold to them who would espouse her for their own, as she did unto the other two; which possibly was the reason why she was not so hastily courted by her first discoverers."

For more than a century, then, after the first discovery of the Northern continent, and for a like period after its whole coast had been traced, from Newfoundland to the southern point of Florida, the territory of what is now called New England remained almost untouched by the foot of European adventure. The cupidity of mankind was not tempted to invade her neglected shores, by mines of gold, or treasures of silver. The silent forests threaded only by their wild and aboriginal inhabitants, were untrodden by the armed heel of the Spanish warrior, who had long before scaled the Andes, red with the blood of conquest; unassailed by the adventurous Portuguese, who had doubled the Cape of Good Hope; and disregarded by that monarch who had furnished Cabot with the means of pointing out this wide country to Europe.

It is not perhaps expedient, or profitable, to go back to abstract theories as to the rights of possession; free, absolute and exclusive possession, which belonged to those who occupied, and from time immemorial had occupied the soil upon which we now stand. But it has always seemed to me a question in morals, not altogether clear, that bands of roaming savages have a right, to shut from the sun all the joyful fruits of the earth, that beasts of chase may lie forever secluded in the depth of their boundless forests.—If this were an original question, I confess that the axe of the woodman would ring on my ears as pleasantly as the war-whoop of the savage. The quiet villages of New England seem to me now as beautiful, and as becoming to the fair face of nature, as the wigwams of the Indians. The spires of churches pointing upwards to heaven, as if to invite our contemplations thither, also appear in my eyes, objects quite as worthy of regard, as the victim bound to the stake, and surrounded by tortures intended to tempt the endurance of his steadfast soul.

The deep solitude of the forest fills the human mind with gloomy thoughts and dark imaginings. Was it intended by the God of nature that this silence should remain forever unbroken? That these recesses should never be penetrated? That the beams of a glorious luminary, should never dispel the pestilential vapor from the swamp, or warm the generous soil into prolific and life-supporting returns for its cultivation and improvement? Was it destined by Providence, that ignorance should always prevail in the boundless regions of America and that she alone, of all the world, should be shut out from the blessings of civilization, and all the aspirations of hope in the ennobling forms presented by the Christian faith? Had the native Indian such an exclusive right, in a moral point of view,

to the possession and occupancy of millions of acres, not required by his necessities, merely because he happened to be upon the soil when it was first seen by the adventurous, yet civilized European? Could the suffering thousands of Ireland and Germany be, at this time, with justice excluded by the natives from a participation in the blessings and enjoyments which may be afforded by the unoccupied wastes of this vast continent? Was a country capable of sustaining millions of human beings in comfort and competency, to be restricted to the use of a few thousands of savages, dressed in skins, and roaming over their broad lands, in pursuit of the deer, the beaver, and the buffalo?

It seems to me, there is no law of morals, no rule of right, no command of religion, according to any form or manner of belief,—which does or can assert, or maintain, any such title to an absolute, exclusive, adverse possession, on the part of the aborigines. They had claims, beyond doubt, which were to be respected and upheld. They could not, with any show of justice, be driven altogether from the graves of their fathers; but our ancestors could fairly claim a right to participate in that occupancy which the Creator intended for all his creatures. The hunter state was not that which was originally established for man; and it was only when he had fallen and become degenerate, that, assimilating himself to the tiger and wolf, man became himself a prowling beast of prey. No! These fair regions were not destined for eternal solitudes. Savages with their victims were not to occupy, exclusively and forever, the thousand hills of the cattle, and all the pleasant valleys of the husbandman. A better and a nobler use was reserved for them. Ignorance was to be banished before the face of civilization; the ferocity of the untamed hunter, was to be softened

down by the combined influence of knowledge and religion; the trees of the forest were to give place to the olive and the vine; the rose was to blush and the violet to bloom where the briar and the thorn claimed occupation; and the fair face of nature was to shine out in all that beauty for which it was originally created.

"God," said our ancestors, "had brought a vine into this wilderness; had cast out the heathen and planted it; and had also made room for it; and he caused it to take root, and it filled the land; so that it had sent forth its boughs to the sea, and its branches to the river."

But irrespective of such considerations, the first settlers of New England were always regardful of the rights of the natives and endeavored upon all occasions to protect them in their just privileges, while at the same time they restrained their ferocity, and checked their aggressions. It is well known to you all, as a matter of familiar history, that antecedently to the arrival of the Mayflower at Plymouth, the whole country, bordering upon that coast, and extending far inland, had been so desolated by a pestilence that it was nearly, if not quite depopulated; and it was several months after their first landing at Cape Cod, before the Pilgrims had an opportunity of speaking with Samoset, the first native with whom they held parley. He informed them that about four years before their arrival, all the inhabitants of that vicinity had died of an extraordinary disease, and that there was "neither man, nor woman, nor child remaining." "Indeed," says an early writer, "we found none; so, there was none to hinder our possession, or lay claim unto it."

The great patent, issued by King James, in 1620, recites that he had been given certainly to know, that the country about to be occupied had been depopulated, so that there was not left, for many leagues together,

any that did claim or challenge any interest therein; and therefore, says the Charter, it was supposed that the appointed time was come, "that those large and goodly territories, deserted as it were, by their natural inhabitants, should be possessed and enjoyed by such as should, by the powerful arm of God, be directed and conducted thither." And the grant was made in terms, for "the enlargement of the Christian religion, to stretch out the bounds of the king's dominions, and to replenish those deserts with people, governed by laws, and for the more peaceable commerce of all, who should have occasion to traffic in those territories."

It seems that the country lying between Plymouth and the great Narragansett Bay, was under the jurisdiction and sway of Mas-sas-so-it, Sachem of the Wampanoags, a tribe residing in the vicinity of Mount Hope, and chief ruler also of all the nations who dwelt between that Bay and the sea.

This chief went to Plymouth, (which was then called Patuxet by the Indians,) on the 22d of March, 1621, with a band of sixty armed men to meet the newly arrived strangers. They saluted him with words of love from King James, desiring to traffic, and make a firm peace with the chief, as their next neighbor. This communication was well received by the savage monarch; and thereupon a treaty of six articles was entered into between the Pilgrims and Massassoit; which was kept with good faith, on both sides, during his whole life. Indeed, so far as I have been able to discover, the first settlers of Plymouth, of Massachusetts, of Connecticut, New Haven and Rhode Island, never did usurp any claim of title to the Indian lands, without their free consent, manifested either by gift or purchase.

It is true that the considerations paid, may seem in-



considerable, estimating land by its present value; but when one Englishman sold to another, one fourth part of a common sized township, for a wheelbarrow, you may readily imagine that land was in no special estimation with the indolent native, who deemed all employment in its cultivation to be below the dignity of a warrior, and fit only for women.

The grantees under the New Plymouth patent were expressly instructed by the Company, if the savages claimed any right of inheritance, to obtain their title by purchase; that "the least scruple of intrusion might be avoided." And in 1676, after the war with King Philip began, Governor Winslow of Plymouth, openly asserted, that before those troubles broke out, the English did not possess one foot of land in that Colony, but what was fairly obtained by honest purchase, from the Indian proprietors. "We found," says Cushman, "the place where we lived empty; the people being all dead and gone away, and none living near by eight or ten miles; and though, in time of hardship, we found some eight bushels of corn hid up in a cave, and knew no owners of it, yet, afterwards learning of the owners, we gave them, in their estimation, double the value of it. Our care also, hath been to maintain peace amongst them, and we have always set ourselves against such of them as used any rebellion or treachery against their own governors; and when any of them are in want, as often they are, in the winter, when their corn is done, we supply them to our power, and have them in our houses, eating and drinking, and warming themselves; which thing, though it be something a trouble to us, yet because they should see and take knowledge of our labors, order and diligence, both for this life and a better, we are content to bear it."

The people of Plymouth procured titles to the land

occupied by them from Massassoit, who claimed it all as his own, and that he alone had a right to dispose of it; and it was from him and his sons that the first grants were obtained. "It is mine," said he, "and mine is the sole claim in existence." But his chiefs gave their assent also, and signed deeds, on several occasions. Neither was this accomplished, says Winslow, "by threats and blows, or shaking of sword, or sound of trumpet; for as our faculty that way is small, and our strength less, so our warring with them is after another manner, namely, by friendly usage, love, peace, honest carriage, and good counsel."

Indeed, this objection to the occupancy of the country by the first settlers, is as old as their pilgrimage, and was met and answered by them, at the time.

Mr. Cushman, in his reasons for removing from England to America, given in 1621, states expressly, that he does not put the right of colonization upon that of discovery, which was then assumed by all nations as the foundation of title; on the contrary, after mentioning that claim, he passes it by, "lest he should be thought to meddle with that which did not concern him, or was beyond his discerning;" and he places "the right to live in the heathen's country," upon the hope of their conversion, and the unoccupied condition of the country, where "its few inhabitants only ran over the grass like the foxes and wild beasts, without industry, art, science, skill, or faculty to use the land." Then again, he asserts an express grant from Massassoit, with divers of his chiefs, "which was obtained," says he, "by friendly composition." Indeed, the people of Plymouth never did, until after Philip's war, claim or obtain any lands belonging to the Indians, by violence or conquest. After the defeat and dispersion of the Wampanoags, fifty-six years after the first settlement, then,

and not till then, were the lands occupied by them, sequestrated by the conquerors, for the benefit of wounded soldiers, and those who had been ruined by the desolations of that fierce contest.

And so, too, of Connecticut and Massachusetts, and Rhode Island; their titles were all derived by deeds and grants from the Indians. In the year 1631, before the country between Boston and Hartford had been explored, a chief living near the banks of the Connecticut, made a journey to Plymouth and Boston, for the express purpose of inviting a settlement on that river. He described the fertility of the soil, and promised, if the English would make a plantation there, he would annually supply them with beaver skins and corn. His object was, amongst other things, to obtain their protection against the Pequots, the most fierce and warlike of the Indian tribes; and when the settlements were afterwards begun upon the Connecticut, the Indian title was extinguished in every case by their own free and voluntary consent, without violence or fraud on the part of the whites. Indeed this could not well be otherwise, for until the subjugation of the Pequots, in the year 1637, the settlers had no power to coerce the Indians, being themselves but a feeble band, constantly occupied in the cultivation of the land, for the means of subsistence. And this led them, as a matter of necessity rather than choice, to seek the banks of rivers which were comparatively free from trees, and better prepared to receive the plough than the hill-sides and the plains. At the close of the year 1636, there were not more than two hundred and fifty men in the towns planted upon the river; and hence, it would have been madness to practise either fraud or violence upon the natives, who were infinitely superior to the settlers, both in numbers and power.

And as the plantations extended, so in every case did the colonists begin their labors by purchases of the land from the native occupants, giving fair and satisfactory equivalents in return. If the title of the savage to his native soil was ever disregarded, it was not by the first settlers, or their descendants. On the contrary, when in 1687, the charters granted to the colonists had been vacated by the British Crown, and the title of the planters derided, they put themselves expressly upon the grants furnished by the natives themselves. But Andros, with the haughty insolence of delegated power, declared that Indian deeds were no better than "the scratch of a bear's paw;" and the occupants were actually compelled, in many instances, to take out new patents for their own lands at a heavy charge. I think, therefore, that we may challenge the world to show one instance where our ancestors usurped a title to the land of the Indians, or unjustly expelled them from it. On the contrary, their claims were always conceded and respected; and while the right to colonize was asserted, the title of the occupant of the soil was never overlooked or disregarded.

In this connection we may observe also, that it has not unfrequently been made a subject of charge against the first settlers of New England, that they were oppressive and unjust towards the aboriginal inhabitants, not only in respect of their lands, but also in their personal and political relations; that if they did not openly assail the natives with violence, they tempted them, nevertheless, to deeds of outrage, that a pretext might be afforded for their destruction. Poetry has given her aid to this subject; and the most beautiful writer New York has yet produced, has pursued the theme with all the powers of genius and eloquence, in his essays on this vanished race. Carried away by the



fervor of this author's imagination, one might suppose that our ancestors were little better than a band of lawless plunderers, who trampled down the rights of the natives, spoiling them of their homes, and devastating their country. Philip of Pokanoket, has furnished a subject, not only for the resistless power of Mr. Irving's description, but for the poetic imaginings of Sands and of Eastburn; and the last of this kingly race is clothed with all the savage virtues of a Homeric hero.

Such sketches are the work of fancy, not of historical truth and accuracy; for it may be asserted with entire confidence, that for more than half a century after the arrival of the Mayflower, the Pilgrims and their descendants lived in peace and friendship with the natives, undisturbed by outbreaks or lawless aggressions. When Massassoit was ill, and thought to be dying, about three years after the first landing of the emigrants, Mr. Winslow was sent by the colony to pay him a visit at his royal residence, near Mount Hope. In the kindest manner this friendly messenger administered to his wants, and finally by his skill and attention restored him to health. In grateful recollection of this, Massassoit disclosed to the Plymouth Colony an intention on the part of the Massachusetts Indians to cut them off by a secret attack. At one time when Massassoit was invaded in his own country, and hard beset by the Narragansetts, he was relieved by the English; the enemy upon their approach, retiring to their own country without resistance. After the death of this chief, his two sons, Wamsutta and Metacomet, named by the English at their own request, Alexander and Philip, went voluntarily to Plymouth to renew the ancient league of friendship between the two nations and pledge again their faith, fidelity and obedience to

the English; and for twenty years after the death of Massassoit, peace was preserved between the parties. The same remarks which have been made with regard to the Pokanokets, are equally true when applied to the Narragansetts,—who for the same length of time remained at peace with the plantations of Connecticut, Rhode Island, Plymouth, and Massachusetts.

During all this period it was doubtless the policy of the first settlers as well as their wish, to preserve pacific relations with their uncivilized neighbors. But this was not done by any poor or fawning submission in their weakness, to superior power. Their conduct was always open, bold and manly.

Canonicus the great chief of the Narragansetts, manifested some jealousy of the new comers shortly after their arrival, but chiefly because of the friendly relations which existed between them and his old enemies of Mount Hope. But our fathers knew full well how to deal with the savage, whether he came with the salutations of peace, or the war-whoop of his race. Early in the year 1622, a messenger from Canonicus arrived at Plymouth, charged with a gift, at once significant and dangerous, "a bundle of new arrows, lapped in a rattlesnake's skin." This messenger was at first detained, but being considered as a mere herald from his master, Governor Bradford ordered him to be dismissed with bold threats, "daring them to do their worst;" and when informed by his interpreter that the rattlesnake's skin and arrows portended war and desolation, the intrepid governor stuffed the skin with powder and shot, and sent it back to Canonicus with the like defiance. "This message," says Winslow, "was sent by an Indian, and delivered in such sort as was no small terror to this savage king, inasmuch as he would not once touch the powder and shot, or suffer it to stay

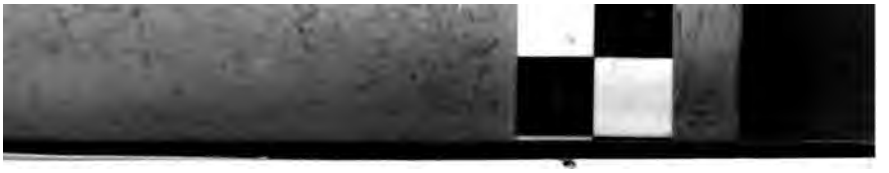
in his house or country; whereupon the messenger refusing it, another took it up, and having been posted back from place to place a long time, at length came whole back again."

Upon the death of Alexander, in 1662, he was succeeded by his brother, Philip, the renowned Metacomet, the hero of song and of story. This chief early began to scheme for the entire destruction of his white neighbors, although he could not bring a well-founded complaint to justify such cold-blooded atrocity; for if he or his nation had suffered any wrongs from the aggressions of the settlers, they were neither deep or wanton, nor were they such as could in any degree justify such fell and savage revenge. But the fact was not so. The English of Plymouth early perceiving an improvident temper on the part of the Indians, and a desire to alienate their lands, passed laws to prohibit such traffic with them, and secured to the Wampanoags and their descendants, all the fine country in the vicinity of Mount Hope; those lands and waters being peculiarly well suited to their condition; the lands as corn land, and the waters abounding in fish and fowl. Nay, further, to prevent encroachments, the inhabitants on their northern frontier drew a strong fence from the Taunton river entirely across the border, to prevent their cattle from straying into the Indian possessions.

Fiction has given to Metacomet an interest which he, in my judgment, in no wise deserves, either from his acts or personal character. It is true, by dissimulation and art, he drew all the neighboring tribes, including the Narragansetts, his old enemies, into a general and deep-laid plot for the total annihilation of the white race. Being suspected and charged with it, he nevertheless solemnly denied all hostile intent, until the moment came when he could let loose his fierce warriors

upon the midnight slumbers of the settlers, rousing them to a hasty defence by the glare of their burning dwellings. The war being begun, and by the Indians themselves, was pursued by our brave ancestors with all that constancy for which they were so remarkable, until Philip, by his death, expiated a portion of the bloody wrongs he had inflicted upon his neighbors. He plunged his nation into all the perils of war, but did not himself, so far as I can discover, encounter its dangers, for he was never seen in battle by any white man, from the commencement of his murders down to the time when he was slain. Indeed he was always the first, says Captain Church, to fly in every engagement; and that brave officer, in laying the plan for Philip's final surprise in the swamps of Mount Hope, acted upon this well-known habit, and bade his men shoot the first savage who silently fled, expecting thereby to secure the death of this relentless sachem; and his anticipations were all fulfilled; for when the attack was commenced, Philip, starting at the first gun, rushed headlong from his concealment, and was slain by one of his own nation in his cowardly flight. How different was the conduct of his followers. One had openly called him, before the war began, "a white livered cur;" and in the last battle ever witnessed by the mortal eyes of Philip, his men stood their ground, so cheered on by the war-cries of one of their chiefs, that Captain Church, attracted by his bold conduct, asked an interpreter who that sachem was, and what he said. "It is old Annawan," replied the Indian, "Philip's great captain, calling on his soldiers to stand to it and fight stoutly."

Remember, then, that the settlers of New England had lived with their aboriginal neighbors in peace and friendship for more than fifty years before the great



war began; and those relations might have been maintained for ever, if the nations could have restrained the ferocity of their passions, or subdued their thirst for blood; for I undertake to say that the complaints made by the Indians themselves, were not causes of war, even according to their own wild and savage notions. It may be that they would have melted away before the plough and the sickle; but they would have gone peacefully, and in the order of nature. The desolation of savage life cannot stand before the improvements of civilization; and blessed be God that it cannot!

It is hardly necessary to vindicate the conduct of the first colonists of the Connecticut Valley, in relation to their contest with the Pequots, in the year 1637, as it is universally admitted that the fault of that war lay entirely on the side of that fierce nation. The early emigrants to Windsor, Hartford, and Weathersfield, had never encroached in any respect upon the territory of the Pequots, whose country lay on both sides of the Thames, far from the scenes of those early settlements; and this proud tribe seems to have commenced hostile attacks upon their distant neighbors, from the mere thirst of blood, natural to barbarians in all parts of the globe. They had murdered about thirty persons before the towns on the Connecticut attempted any resistance; but finding themselves at last in a most critical position, and driven to the necessity of venturing upon a contest for the preservation of their lives, they entered into it with all the fortitude and courage of their heroic race. Raising a little force of ninety men, they sent them in three small vessels, under the brave Captain Mason, by the way of the river and sound to the Narragansett Bay. Disembarking there, and trusting to savages for their guides, the stars of heaven for their canopy, the brooks and woods for their supplies, they

traversed the whole territory of the Narragansetts, and approached the barbarians with such caution and celerity, as to take them entirely by surprise in their fort, upon the west side of the Mystic river. Then ensued a struggle, not merely for victory, but life itself, for if the attack had failed, there was no retreat for this band of devoted men; no escape from their merciless foes. But putting their trust in the God of battles, they charged directly upon seven times their numbers, with such determined impetuosity as to give the Pequots an overthrow from which they never recovered; and from that time forth the colony of Connecticut remained in peace with all the native tribes, until the great conspiracy of Philip called them forth again with spear and shield, in their own just defence.

In this contest with the Pequots, the early settlers exhibited all their peculiar characteristics. Before their departure, Mr. Hooker addressed the little army with that confidence in an overruling Providence, which never on any occasion had deserted them. "Fellow soldiers!" said he, "countrymen, and companions, in this wilderness work, who are gathered together this day by the inevitable providence of the Great Jehovah, not in a tumultuous manner, hurried on by the floating fancy of every hot-headed brain, but purposely picked out by the godly great fathers of this government, that your prowess may carry out the work where justice in her righteous course is obstructed. Every common soldier among you is now installed a magistrate. Then show yourselves men of courage; yet remember that all true bred soldiers receive this as a common maxim: cruelty and cowardice are inseparable companions. And now to you I put the question, who would not fight in such a cause with an agile spirit and undaunted boldness?—Riches and honor are, next to a good cause,



eyed by every soldier; but although gold and silver be wanting, yet have you that to maintain which is far more precious, the lives, liberties, and new purchased freedoms of the endeared servants of our Lord Christ Jesus, and of your second selves even, your affectionate bosom mates, together with the chief pledges of your loves, the comforting contents of harmless prattling and smiling babes; in a word, all the riches of that goodness and mercy that attends the people of God even in this life." Actuated by such motives, impelled forward by such considerations, sustained by such purposes, how could the early colonists of New England fail in their enterprises?

After the first struggles for mere existence on the part of the settlers were over, view them marching steadily forward in the paths of order, religion and morality; enacting laws, constructing roads, establishing schools, and educating their children for the new business of self-government. The colonies, it is true, were under the general jurisdiction of the king and parliament, yet having by their charters the power of making laws, they entered at once upon these important concerns; and perceiving that their institutions were to be unlike all others in the world, they immediately began to frame statutes suited to their peculiar wants. Having been subject to the common law, and being well skilled in its maxims, they adopted such portions of it as were suited to their circumstances, but discarded, in effect, such English statutes as were not applicable to their new condition; publishing at the same time, in one of the colonies, this preface to their own enactments: "Now in these our laws, although we may seem to vary or differ, yet it is not our purpose to repugn the statute laws of England, so far as we understand them;" thereby exhibiting, perhaps the first great

example of construing a constitution, as each man may comprehend it.

They were not bound down to a servile imitation of British precedents, but considered the law in the abstract as containing rules of civil government, for free and thinking men, who were imposing just restraints upon themselves, and not dictating to others. The common law was evidently their admiration; yet keeping the commandments in view, if they bowed down, they did not worship it. On the contrary, their reflections upon this great subject of law-making, were in a high degree original; its importance immediately arresting their attention and commanding both solicitude and care. Mr. Cotton, or Mr. Davenport, composed and published in Boston, as far back as 1663, "A Discourse on Civil Government in a New Plantation;" and in 1650 Mr. Ludlow, a distinguished jurist of Connecticut, compiled a body of laws for that commonwealth, at the request of its government; thus showing from the very outset, that civil rule, as it should be in a new plantation, was kept constantly in view; and nothing is more striking or admirable than the early legislation of our ancestors upon natural, human rights, and the best mode of protecting them.

With a bold defiance of customs immemorial, and of forms rendered sacred by antiquity, they commenced the progress of legal reform, from the moment their feet first pressed the sod of their new-found country. With no affected disregard for the wisdom and learning of their ancestors, with no pretensions to a more perfect knowledge of man's true social condition than that which prevailed at home, they did, nevertheless, from the beginning institute the inquiry, as to how much of an antiquated system was suited to their wants and condition; and with a steady eye upon ancient pre-

cedents, begin a system of legal change, at once radical yet conservative. And I may here safely assert, that many if not all the important alterations made in the jurisprudence of this State, within the last fifty years, have been borrowed, directly or indirectly, from the laws of New England, and especially from those of Connecticut.

The subject of non-imprisonment for debt, for instance, concerning which so much has been said and done within the last twenty years, was considered and acted upon in New England two hundred years ago; and the act passed by the State of New York in the year 1833, entitled, "an act to abolish imprisonment for debt, and to punish fraudulent debtors," is scarcely anything more than a transcript from an act of 1650, passed by the colony of Connecticut. The latter act provides "that no person should be arrested or imprisoned for any debt or fine, if the law could find any competent means of satisfaction from his estate; and if not, his person might be arrested and imprisoned till satisfaction; provided nevertheless, that no man's person should be kept in prison for debt but when there appeared to be some estate which he would not produce;" and the chief difference between the two lies in this, that the primitive act is clear and explicit, while the modern one is so blind and confused, that various constructions have been put upon it by different tribunals, and sometimes by the same tribunal. Nor was this exemption from imprisonment a vain illusion, "keeping the word of promise to the ear, but breaking it to the hope." It was substantial and complete; for no honest man in Connecticut could ever be kept in the cells of a prison. There was, it is true, a theory of non-imprisonment for debt in other lands, but it was a theory only, well illustrated in the "Antiquary," as you

may remember, by Mr. Oldbuck, in a dialogue with his nephew. "Nephew," said that amusing creation of Scott's fancy, "it is a remarkable thing that in this happy country no man can be legally imprisoned for debt." "The truth is, the king, interesting himself as a monarch should, in his subjects' private affairs, is so good as to interfere at the request of the creditor and to send the debtor his royal command to do him justice within a certain time, fifteen days, or six, as the case may be. Well, the man resists and disobeys. What follows? Why that he be lawfully and rightfully declared a rebel to our gracious sovereign, whose command he has disobeyed, and that by three blasts of a horn at the market-place of Edinburgh, the metropolis of Scotland. And he is then legally imprisoned, not on account of any civil debt, but because of his ungrateful contempt of the royal mandate." In Connecticut there was no royal mandate which could send a man to jail with three blasts of a horn.

Some years ago, letters upon this important subject of imprisonment for debt, were addressed to John Adams and Daniel Webster; and each of those illustrious men stated in reply, that if it were an original and open question, neither of them had any doubt of its oppressive character, nor the propriety of abolishing it. And since that period a number of the States, as well as Congress itself, have interfered for the just preservation of human liberty, except in cases of crime. But here we find that in 1650 the persons of men were held free from the slavery of imprisonment when caused by misfortune or poverty; while the dishonest debtor, who had the means of payment, but refused to appropriate them to the discharge of his engagements, was to be treated as a felon, and to meet with a felon's reward. And so tender were they then of personal liberty, that

the first process against a debtor was a summons commanding him to appear and answer the complaint made against him; and it was only upon his refusal that an attachment could be issued against him for his "wilful contempt."

By another section of the same statute, which is also embodied in the far-famed modern code of New York, it was provided, that if any citizen of Connecticut was about to abscond, or convey away his estate with intent to defraud his creditors, then that an attachment might issue against him for the benefit of all his creditors. But to guard against abuses, it was also provided, that if any attachment were laid upon any man's estate upon a pretence of a great sum, and it was not proved to be due in some near portion to the sum mentioned in the attachment, then that the sureties always required upon the issuing of such process, should be liable for the damages sustained thereby. Could anything be more wise, just or prudent, than laws like these? And have we, in relation to the same subject, improved upon them down to this day? But who, in modern times, has given credit to our ancestors for their labors of wisdom and charity in this behalf, or acknowledged the source from whence these improvements have been derived?

So again, they had a proceeding in relation to real property, very analogous to what is termed a creditor's bill in this State, (land being at that time a principal object of care and value in the colonies,) whereby creditors might have the benefit of its sale, by a very simple and inexpensive process, in the order of the presenting of their claims. But there was a difference, nevertheless, between the modern and the ancient law, in this, that in cases of insolvency on the part of the debtor, the ancient law directs that the attachments should enure to the benefit of all creditors in proportion to

their respective claims; while the modern one gives a preference and priority to the most vigilant; and in this particular the justice of the original act is obvious and pre-eminent. So, in relation to trials by jury, (an institution which was the subject of the first law passed by the Plymouth settlement,) one colony had a most excellent provision, which might be adopted with decided benefit here in this city. It was, that juries might be called of six or twelve persons, according to the importance of the subject, and that a verdict of four out of six, and eight out of twelve, should be conclusive upon the parties, unless a new trial were granted. Now, the requirements of our practice, derived from the laws of England, which demand an absolute unanimity in the minds of twelve men, even in civil causes, are oftentimes the source of much delay, expense, and injury, to all the parties concerned. Would not the pages written by our forefathers upon these important concerns disclose something more than the ancients found in the leaves of a Sybiline oracle, blown about by the winds of heaven as the heralds of fortuitous prophecy and justice? Our ancestors, with a far-reaching sagacity, also provided for a complete registration of all grants of land, in order that, by a public and open inspection of conveyances, clear evidences of title might be found and preserved. To this day, England herself has not attained to these improvements, except in a limited number of counties; and there each proprietor must trust to private care alone for the preservation of his estate.

The complicated forms in civil proceedings, the voluminous pages of the conveyancer's deeds, and the tautology of English statutes were at once exploded, and in their place came simple and clear statements of claim and counter claim, direct and straight-forward plead-

ings, and brief, but comprehensive, evidences of title. An English deed for an hundred acres is engrossed on parchment, with the letters of the alphabet tortured into a thousand useless shapes, that ancient forms may be preserved. A New England deed, in one brief page, contains all the elements of a perfect contract between the parties, with a direct assurance of title. The known defects in the laws and practice of England pointed out and so strikingly stated by Lord Brougham, in his great speech upon Law Reforms, delivered in the House of Commons, in 1828, were discovered and banished from the New England States, while they were yet colonies under the British crown. Nor can I find any essential changes or improvements specified or called for by that remarkable statesman, which were not adopted by our ancestors years ago.

You are aware that in England some of the most important offices in the civil law courts, are held by prelates of the church, and that the whole law of marriage and divorce, of personal estates, both testate and intestate, is administered under the control of bishops and archbishops. This being an inheritance from Rome, and one of the worst of the long-continued papal abuses, was abolished at once and forever by our ancestors, who committed these important trusts to responsible men, appointed by responsible tribunals; while dower and inheritance, which vary in England, with the varying customs of counties and manors, were made uniform and consistent.

The complicated proceedings of English courts in actions of ejectment were also discarded in the Eastern States, and it is only within the last twenty years that New York has adopted this obvious improvement from one of her nearest sisters. Then again, wise and equal laws were provided for a just distribution of estates

among children and heirs, while tenures were made simple, and primogenitures abolished. In England all the lands of the ancestor, on one side of a river, might descend to the oldest son, on the other to the youngest; while in a third place, the children might inherit equally. But in New England, the dictates of common sense and common justice were at once obeyed, and tenures placed upon their true foundations. And then, as to that law which prefers the first-born son to all others, in itself so iniquitous; what had our ancestors to say to that? They blotted it out from their statute-book, and banished it forever. How otherwise could equal rights be maintained, or republican forms of government preserved? In the proud monarchies of Europe, it became the policy of the aristocracy to preserve great estates in the same families in a direct line, that their influence might remain continuous and unbroken, thus transmitting from father to son not only the wealth of the ancestor, but his political influence also.

But in a free country, how should we stand if the parent might entail upon his son whole towns and counties and states, even without any accompanying political authority? Would free men contentedly ride, for thirty miles, by the side of a great estate, (as you may now in some parts of Great Britain) with the reflection in their minds, that in all time to come, the influence of that proprietor and his descendants must remain unchecked and undisturbed? What caused the most serious outbreaks among the people of Rome? And why did they desert their city, and take refuge on the sacred mount? The monopoly of lands by the rich, and the debts of the poor. What was the remedy proposed there? A division of those lands among persons whose claims upon them were those of hard necessity, if not of natural justice. But what distributive law

did our ancestors provide to check, if not effectually destroy, this dangerous accumulation of wealth in the same hands? They said that lands, where there was no will to direct otherwise, should descend to all the heirs alike; that personal property should be equally distributed, and the power of entailment so limited, that to preserve its existence it must be renewed in every generation. This, says Judge Story, is the true agrarian law, which in all time to come will guard the just rights of acquirement and possession, while it corrects the great public evils of inordinate accumulation; and you see how instantly our ancestors seized upon and adopted this indispensable restraint.

Then the criminal laws of England, more bloody than the laws of Draco, were all remodeled, and their severities softened down; even at that time, when the public mind had not begun much to consider this important subject. In all things, I assert with confidence, in relation to the laws, both public and private, our ancestors made great and marvelous improvements upon those of the land from whence they took their origin. And these reforms became afterwards matters of the highest political concernment, when they had shaken off the control of the mother country. Republican in their habits of thinking and acting; republican in their frugality; republican in their laws and forms of government, the States of New England were early prepared for that great change wrought out for them by the war of the Revolution. Their civil and political rights were well understood from the very beginning; they were preserved and cherished through all their early struggles for existence, and were all prepared to be acted upon when the day of trial came. Hence it has been remarked, and with strict propriety, that at the time of our Independence, so slight was the connection

between some of the colonies and the mother country in their relations of law and government, and the change interfered so little with their internal concerns, that the transition from a dependent to a sovereign condition was almost imperceptible. In Connecticut, they merely erased the name of "his majesty," from their legal proceedings, and inserted, "by the name and authority of the State;" and then, in all essential particulars, the administration of the law proceeded after the Revolution, exactly as it had done before.

I presume, before dismissing this part of the subject, it may be expected, that I, considering my profession, should not pass by that which has been made a matter of scoffing and reproach upon a colony of New England, by those who, never investigating its reality, have caught from others the traditional jests connected with the blue laws of New Haven.

In the first place, it seems to be supposed that there actually were, in that colony, grave enactments against offending beer-barrels, and that the austerity of Puritan practice even prohibited a mother from kissing her child on a Sunday. Let those who have lightly received such impressions, and lightly conveyed them to others, look into the early laws of New Haven, and tell me whether, upon such examination, any mirthful emotions can come over their minds? And let me remind them further, that most of the supposed enactments rest upon this one, of which, perhaps they may have heard: "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day!"

Nothing more solemn, nothing more imposing, nothing more grave or dignified, can be found in all history, than the first acts of the colony of New Haven, when they proceeded to lay the foundations of their government. The free planters being all assembled,

say their records, Mr. Davenport commenced the business by a sermon upon these words: "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars." After this discourse and a solemn invocation of the name of God in prayer, they were reminded of the business for which they had met; that it was "for the establishment of such civil order as might be most pleasing unto God, and for the choosing of the fittest men for the foundation work of a church to be gathered." Mr. Davenport thereupon proposed divers queries, praying them to consider seriously the weight of the business about which they had met, and not to be rash in giving their votes for things which they did not understand, but to digest thoroughly, and without respect to men, what should be proposed to them, giving such answers as they would be willing should *stand upon record for posterity!* And thereupon it was propounded in the first place, "whether the Scriptures hold forth a perfect rule for the direction and government of men in their duties." This was assented to without an opposing voice; and let me ask whether there are any here present, who, if they had been standing by the side of Mr. Davenport, on that solemn occasion, would have ventured to deny that such a rule may be found in those sacred writings? The second question was, whether in the choosing of magistrates, the making and repealing of laws and the dividing of lands, the planters would be governed by the rules which the Scriptures hold forth? This also was assented to, "and no man gainsayed it, and they did testify the same by holding up their hands, both when it was first propounded, and afterwards confirmed the same, by holding up their hands when it was read unto them in public." In the improvements of time, we have been taught by our necessities, many lessons in the mode of adapting laws to

our changing condition; but stand back in contemplation, two hundred years, and tell me where could you discover better models for the government of a free people, both in the choice of their magistrates and the division of their lands, than those found in the Jewish polity? Why, our own laws, in relation to the division of estates, do not differ essentially from the laws which governed the Hebrews; their object being to secure not only an equal distribution of property, but to bring back, at given periods of time, to the same families, for equal use and enjoyment, such allotments of land as might have been alienated. Where in the annals of civilized Europe can you find the history of a government more free, or more republican, than that which existed among the Jews, during the period of their judges? And when was the choice of magistrates left more open and unrestrained than among the same people, at the same epoch? What was there narrow, or bigoted, or objectionable in the second query which I have read? For you will recollect that the proposition was not, to adopt Jewish laws and Jewish forms of government indiscriminately; but whether fit rules for the choosing of magistrates, the framing of laws, and the division of lands might not be found in the Bible, including both Testaments, the new as well as the old? And if the question were now proposed here, I venture to assert, that no man would "gainsay it, but all would testify for the same by holding up their hands, both when propounded, and when afterwards it should be read to them." The third query had reference merely to the form of admission to the church; and the fourth was: "whether they held themselves bound to establish such civil order as might best secure the peace of the ordinances to them and their posterity;" and this, of course, was carried without dissent; for no man now,

Jew or Gentile, Christian or Pagan, can find any objection to this proposition in the abstract, or as it was originally presented for consideration and adoption.

Mr. Davenport thereupon declared from the Scriptures, that the magistrates to be entrusted with the matters of government, according to the rule thus adopted, must be "able men, such as fear God; men of truth, hating covetousness." And if we could now, even in these days, by a like vote secure such magistrates, "fearing God and hating covetousness," I, for one, would "belong to that party." Mr. Davenport further declared, that by their vote they were free to cast themselves into any mould and form of a commonwealth, which appeared to them best, for the securing of the objects contemplated in his propositions; and he charged Mr. Eaton the first Governor, in open court, that he should not respect persons in judgment; that he should hear the small as well as the great and that he should not fear the face of man.

Such were the rules adopted by that plantation, upon its establishment; but from the strict administration of them, went forth the report concerning the blue laws of Connecticut. There were not in fact, any such enactments; but there were trials for offences against the Sabbath, and against modest decency, founded upon the general law of morals, which have led to a misapprehension upon this subject, and served to cast ridicule where none whatever was deserved.

Again: it has often been made a subject of reproach upon our ancestors, that having left their own country for the sake of religious freedom, and the enjoyment of the rights of conscience unshackled and uncontrolled, they did nevertheless, become themselves intolerant, the moment they were in possession of a country with their own supremacy firmly established; that they were nar-

row in their notions, selfish in their designs, exclusive in their purposes, and tyrannical in their acts; willing to become the subjects and objects of universal religious emancipation themselves, but determined, at the same time, to subdue all others to their opinions.

It seems to me, however, that this is an unfair mode of stating the case. The original settlers did not visit the inhospitable shores of New England for any objects of universal toleration; nor for the purpose of allowing men of all religions, and no religion, an opportunity of planting their errors, or disseminating their infidelity. No! Far different from this were the purposes and objects of those religious wanderers; who, if misguided in their notions, and over scrupulous in their faith, were nevertheless sincere, devout, and upright. With them religious faith was a principle. It was a guide to their actions, a rule for their conduct, and a law for their government; the "be all and the end all" of their objects in this world, and of their hope in that which is to come.

What if they were misguided? What if they were heated with zeal? What if they were exclusive in their opinions, stern in their judgments, and unyielding in their purposes? Were they not actuated by the purest and the holiest motives that ever filled or agitated the breast of men? Had they not left the consolations of home, of kindred, and of country, for the express purpose of worshipping God in the wilderness in their own way? Seeking no associations with those who entertained different opinions; asking no favor, requiring no aid, or succor, or comfort, except from Him who saw their hearts, and knew that they were upright and pure? It may be, that in their peculiar notions in relation to religious government they were misguided; and as a rule of civil action we now all believe that each

creed, and every religion, should be permitted to exist by its own inherent truth, uncontrolled by human laws, unprotected by political favor, untrammelled by worldly device.

This is the modern theory of republican and religious liberty, as maintained in this free, this charitable land; but which finds little favor in any other part of the Christian world. We consider it, and as I think rightly, one of the natural, one of the legitimate, if not inevitable results of that great reform, which shook the papal structure to its centre, and shot through the bosoms of thinking men with an electric force which will never cease to operate, until its objects are accomplished, and man stands forth free from the dictations of his fellow men in all that binds him to a future state.

But believe me, Gentlemen of New England, this doctrine so free, so liberal, so republican, so just in itself, so necessary to our institutions, did not originate in minds filled with the ardor of that faith which sees but one object, and that object under but one form and pressure. Oh, no! The most tolerant man was not, I think, originally the most devout man, although he might have been sincere. No! His lips were not touched as with a live coal from the altar, who first proclaimed that there were no differences to be regarded amongst men in their various creeds. Our fathers cherished their faith as the immortal principle which causes men to feel the necessity of another existence, and to yearn after it, with that overflowing of spirit which gives evidence of the full heart and the contrite soul.

But I am ready to maintain that the original settlers of New England were not even intolerant, in the correct sense of that term, when we understand their purposes and examine their actions. That the congrega-

tion of Mr. Robinson did not desire to associate in civil government with Arians and ranters, with papists and infidels, may be true enough; and why should they not be permitted to worship God by themselves, in their own way, undisturbed by conflicting opinions, unheated by argument, unswayed by opposite practice? They sought not to make converts of others, excepting the heathen. They interfered with no man's religious belief, unless he thrust himself upon their jurisdiction; and within this pale they had, in my judgment, a perfect right to be exclusive. If there were others who thought that peculiarities of doctrine were not of the essence of faith, the wilderness was open, and they might have followed the example of the Pilgrims. "The world was all before them where to choose their place of rest;" and neither Ann Hutchinson, nor Thomas Morton, the disturbing lawyer, nor even Roger Williams himself, had a right to come uncalled for, within the limits of Plymouth or Massachusetts, and then cry out, "persecution and intolerance."

I would speak of Roger Williams with great respect, as of one who had the clearest perceptions of that which is both right and expedient in religious affairs, as connected with civil government. Viewing the question in its modern aspect, when time has made the truth clear, and experience has shown that the power of law need never be brought to act upon spiritual belief, we all of us bear witness to the abstract correctness of Mr. Williams' opinions. He may be considered as among the first of those who advanced and maintained the proposition, that there should be a total separation of ecclesiastical from civil control; and he is entitled to our admiration for the broad extent of his views in the true administration of secular laws upon religious opinion. And yet, in my judgment, there never was a

more unpropitious moment for the promulgation of his peculiar notions upon all these subjects than that selected by him in 1630 and 1632.

At that moment, the settlement in Massachusetts was but just begun. Endicott and Winthrop, and Higginson, and their associates, emigrated with feelings and purposes, and objects, similar to those which had induced Bradford and Winslow, and the Congregational Pilgrims of Leyden to seek a refuge in a distant land; nor did the views and opinions of the emigrants to Massachusetts differ in any essential degree from those entertained by the inhabitants of Plymouth. Between these colonies there was generally harmonious thought and united action; but in their religious sentiments they were not intolerant. No, not as intolerant as we of the present day are; although their civil condition, in some respects, differed widely from our own. In forming the structures of government, our ancestors had to provide for order, safety, and subordination; and that these might all be secured, they had recourse to those ordinances, which they had adopted from deep seated conviction; and upon what better, or broader, or more enduring foundations, could they have rested the hopes of their new colony, than the eternal foundations of religious truth? But these men were not, I assert again, either intolerant or narrow minded, or bigoted in the abstractions of religious belief. On the contrary, they respected the opinions of others; being perfectly willing that they should be enjoyed without molestation; and they only asked for themselves that which they freely granted to all mankind. That they had no good opinion of the superstitions of the Romish church, is true; and that they considered the forms of worship kept up in the church of England as mere modifications of papal observance, is also true; but at

the same time, they had charity for its ordinances, and respect for its members.

This charge of intolerance was an old charge, made against them, or rather against the independent churches, to which the first settlers, for the most part belonged, more than two hundred years ago, and was answered by them at the time. "I have shown," (says Mr. Winslow) "that the foundation of our New England plantations was not laid upon schism, division, or separation, but upon love, peace and happiness, and also, that the primitive churches are the only pattern which the churches of Christ, in New England, have in their eyes; not following Luther, Calvin, Knox, Ainsworth, Robinson, Ames, or any other, further than they follow Christ and his apostles." Is there any thing of bigotry or narrow minded sentiment in this? Any want of toleration or of respect for the opinions of others? Any stiff-necked assertion of superior knowledge, virtue or purity? They would not follow any sect, further than that sect followed Christ and his apostles; and surely, a truer rule, one more plain, direct and certain, could not be adopted.

But what were the sentiments of John Robinson himself, upon this subject? Hear his own words, addressed to his own church, at the time of their departure to begin the great plantation work in New England. Amongst other wholesome instructions, according to Mr. Winslow, he used expressions to this purpose: "That we were now, ere long, to part asunder, and the Lord only knew whether ever he should live to see our faces again. But whether the Lord had appointed it or not, he charged us before God to follow him no further than he followed Christ." He took occasion also, miserably to bewail the state and condition of the reformed church, who would go no further

than the instruments of their reformation. As for example; the Lutherans could not be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw; for whatever part of God's will he had further imparted and revealed to Calvin, they would rather die than embrace it. "And so also," said he, "you see the Calvinists, they stick where he left them; a misery much to be lamented, for though they were precious shining lights in their times, yet God had not revealed his whole will to them. And so he advised us by all means to endeavor to close with the godly party of the kingdom of England, and rather to study union than division, namely, how near we might possibly, without sin, close with them, than in the least measure to effect division or separation from them."

Can you find anything in history more liberal than these beautiful and heartfelt remarks of the godly man, made upon his final separation from his church, when they were to "part asunder, and he never more to see their faces again?" But was he sincere? Hear the testimony of Mr. Winslow upon this point. "For his doctrine," says he, "I living three years under his ministry, before we began the work of plantation in New England, it was always against separation from any the churches of Christ; professing and holding communion both with the French and Dutch churches, yea the tendering it the Scotch also; even holding forth how wary persons ought to be in separating from a church." It is true he condemned the constitution of the church of England, but he condemned it as matter of opinion rather than of censure. "No man," said he, "to whom England is known, can be ignorant that all the natives there, and subjects of the kingdom, although never such strangers from all show of true piety, and goodness, and fraught never so full with many most heinous impieties and vices, are without



difference compelled and enforced by most severe laws, civil and ecclesiastical, into the body of that church; every subject of the kingdom dwelling in this or that parish is bound, will he, nill he, fit or unfit, as with iron bonds, to participate in all holy things, and some unholy too, in that same parish church."

But the emigrants with Governor Winthrop, were scarcely separated at all from the church of England; desiring only its reform in matters of practice. They had been born and brought up in the doctrines of that church, and lived in communion with it. Their ministers had been ordained by her bishops, and officiated in her parochial churches; nor was there any secession until after their arrival in New England. Mr. Higginson, in taking a last look upon his native land exclaimed: "We will not say, as the separatists were wont to say, farewell Babylon! farewell Rome! but we will say farewell, dear England! farewell the church of God in England, and all the Christian friends there." Governor Winthrop, and his company, in a parting address "to the rest of their brethren in and of the church of England, speak of it as their 'dear mother,' from whom they could not part without much sadness of heart and many tears." "We leave it," said they, not "as loathing that milk wherewith we were nourished," "but blessing God for the parentage and education as members of the same body. We shall always rejoice in her good, and unfeignedly grieve for any sorrow that shall ever betide her; and while we have breath, sincerely desire and endeavor the continuance and abundance of her welfare, with the enlargement of her bounds in the kingdom of Christ Jesus; wishing our heads and hearts were fountains of tears for your everlasting welfare, when we shall be in our poor cottages in the wilderness, overshadowed with the spirit of supplication." Are

these the narrow sentiments of bigotry and superstition? Do you discover anything illiberal, anything uncharitable, anything unchristian here? We find then, that there was as much harmony among the emigrants in matters of religious belief, and as much toleration, as there is now, so far as mere opinions were concerned; although in their civil relations they brought their laws to bear in some degree, upon the conduct of men, in matters of faith and practice.

But consider their condition, their purposes and objects. They had gone forth from their homes to cherish sentiments, and secure observances within their own jurisdictions, without let or molestation from others. Their government, both civil and ecclesiastical, was intended for themselves alone, and not to be forced upon unwilling minds, or uncomplying tempers. The grants gave them an exclusive title to the land which they were to occupy, with an uncontrolled right to establish laws for its good government. They had come out for the express purpose of forming a distinct and separate organization; a commonwealth of their own, to be governed just as the proprietaries should themselves see fit.

The original grant to Plymouth only comprehended the country lying east of the present State of Rhode Island, and south of Massachusetts, which last colony was itself at first bounded by the narrow limits of Charles river and the Merrimack. Now, within these circumscribed spaces, those who owned the soil and had the power of governing it, proposed to lay the foundations of new societies, established for their own objects and purposes, and designed to carry out their own peculiar views. They did not invite within their jurisdiction settlers of all nations, kindreds and tongues; but only those who thought as they thought upon the

great subjects of subordination and religion; and hence Plymouth early enacted laws prohibiting strangers, who had not obtained a license for that purpose from the magistrates, from settling within her territories. Recollect, the first emigrants and their associates in England, owned the very soil upon which they stood; and having ample power, for its government, they were desirous of banishing all the elements of discord from the new settlements, by excluding all those who were calculated to introduce them. If other persons, differing from the proprietaries in their opinions and views, were desirous of emigrating to the western world, they had merely to avoid Plymouth and Massachusetts, if they considered their laws or ordinances unkind, unjust, or severe. They could go to the north, or the south, and there was "ample space and verge enough" for all. Why then should individuals, prating of free government, of religion and entire toleration, thrust themselves within these colonial limits, if they did not mean to submit to the laws which governed them? They were not invited thither, nor solicited, nor called for, nor even wanted.

Was there any injustice, then, in laws, in resolutions, or practices, which merely sought to exclude the elements of schism, anarchy and insubordination, for the purpose of preserving peace, good order, sound morality, and a pure religious faith? They did not seek for proselytes, nor invite settlers of a different creed to come within their borders; but such individuals came, nevertheless, without their consent, and insisted upon remaining there, not merely to enjoy their own opinions in modest quietude and silence, but to proclaim those opinions aloud, everywhere, from the high places, and with the express intent of drawing the original settlers from their ancient impressions. And because



those stout-hearted men, who had borne the burthen and heat of the day to accomplish their own peculiar purposes, raised a protest, effectual and firm, against such innovations, the intruders cried out, "persecution and intolerance!" Aye, but some may say, "they drove Roger Williams in the dead of winter into the wilderness, exposed to its cold and hardship, and the tender mercies of its savage inhabitants."

This banishment of Mr. Williams was entirely of his own seeking, and the time selected was chosen by himself. This gentleman, who came over in the year 1630, began life with such a furious partisan zeal, that he refused to join in fellowship with his brethren of Boston, unless they would declare their repentance for having communed with the church of England before they left that country. He was also of opinion, that there should be no punishment for a breach of the Sabbath, or indeed for any violations of the precepts of the first table of the law, unless they disturbed the public peace. That oaths ought not to be tendered to unrepentant men; that thanks should not be given after the sacrament, nor after meat, and that a Christian should not pray with an unregenerate person, even though wife or child! He also insisted, that the title of the Massachusetts Colony to their lands was not good; and he maintained these opinions in the most open and public manner; even refusing to commune with the members of his own church, unless they would separate themselves from the polluted churches of New England. These opinions were deemed to be not only erroneous, but dangerous; and hence he was warned that he must not assert them in public, if he expected to remain within the colony. But as he set the constituted authorities at defiance, sentence of banishment was passed upon him, in October, 1635; with a permis-

sion, however, to remain until spring, provided he would restrain himself from the propensity to make proselytes, and proclaim his opinions to the people. It being soon ascertained, however, that disregarding these injunctions, he was holding meetings at his own house, and preaching upon the very points for which he was censured, an order was given for his arrest; not for the purpose of putting him in prison, or thrusting him out among savages, but for the purpose of sending him back to England. Hearing of this order, he determined to evade it, and so passed over from Massachusetts to the west part of the Plymouth jurisdiction, where he remained for some time among the Indians. His place of retreat being known, "that ever honored Governor Winthrop," as Williams himself styles him, privately wrote him to "steer his course to the Narragansett Bay, as being free from English claims or patents." "I took his prudent motion," says he, "as a voice from God!" Once established within his own jurisdiction, he remained there without interference or molestation on the part of the colonies of Plymouth or Massachusetts, and in perfect friendship with both. What is there to complain of in all this? What was there of hardship or injustice in the case? He had come to the colonies without invitation, and remained there against their wishes. They did not desire to stifle his opinions, for one of their statutes expressly says, that "no creature is Lord, or has power over the faith and consciences of men, nor may restrain them to believe or profess against their consciences; nor deprive them of their lawful liberty in a quiet and orderly way to propose their scruples." But they did desire to suppress the open and public proclamation of opinions, hurtful to their property, and schismatical in their effects. Instead of harmony in an infant and feeble



settlement, under his preaching there would be inflamed zeal, heated controversy, doubtful faith, disturbed principles, and unsettled belief; for Williams himself afterwards became strenuous against the Quakers, holding public disputes with some of their most eminent teachers. At later periods of his life, he lived in open neglect of many of the ordinances for which he had once zealously contended. Instead of separating himself from the anti-Christian churches, against which he had been so loud, he was ready to preach and pray for all sects, and became entirely doubtful as to what church he should unite himself with. Why should Mr. Williams raise up commotion, by attacking the patent of Massachusetts? Why should he, amongst a people who could not by possibility be brought to his way of thinking, deny that the commandments of the first table of the law might be enforced by the secular power? Do any Christian people; does any State; does even Rhode Island herself pretend to maintain good order upon the Sabbath day, without any law for its proper observance? One of the moving causes of emigration from Holland was the profanation of the Sabbath, and the impossibility of correcting the evil there; the Dutch ministers themselves acknowledging the difficulty of withdrawing the people from their sports and ordinary occupations on that day. Should they then, at once throw off observances which were deemed fundamental and sacred? Should they admit themselves to be wrong on this vital point, which has never yet been abandoned by their descendants, and say that conscience made a law for itself, sufficient in all these matters of outward observance? Are the consciences of all men alike? And guided by its dictates alone, can there be uniformity of action and a decent preservation of order and propriety? The thing is impossible.

Even under Mr. Williams, matters seem not to have been mended much, or very harmonious in their operation: for we find that in 1638, the free principles which he wished to establish in Massachusetts did not work particularly well in Rhode Island. "At Providence," says Governor Winthrop, "the devil was not idle, for whereas, at their first coming thither, Mr. Williams, and the rest, did make an order that no man should be molested for his conscience; now men's wives, and children, and servants, claimed liberty to go to all religious meetings, though never so often or private, upon week days; and because one Verin refused to let his wife go to Mr. Williams so oft as she was called for, they required to have him censured; and some were of opinion that if Verin would not suffer his wife to have her liberty, the church should dispose of her to some other man, who would use her better. In conclusion; when they would have censured Verin, another told them it was against their own order; for Verin did what he did out of conscience, and their order was, that no man should be disturbed for conscience."

But they whipped the Anabaptists and persecuted the Quakers, you say? They moderately punished one individual of the former sect, it is true, in the year 1644: "Not," says Mr. Winthrop, "for his opinions, but for his evil behavior, both at home and in court; he being a scandalous person, of loose habits, and much given to lying and idleness." And as for the Quakers, what were they in the days of our fathers? Were they the decent, orderly, quiet and modest people, which we see now, every where obedient to the laws, thrifty, industrious, benevolent and gentle? Would John Winthrop, and William Bradford, and Francis Higginson lay their hands, think ye, upon the excellent persons who at present occupy New Bedford, setting an exam-

ple of subordination, virtue and propriety, to all the world? No, no. The Quakers of the seventeenth century were no more like the gentle Friends of the nineteenth, than the latter are like the Mormons. The former were ranters and fanatics, disturbers of public peace and decency, entering the churches during the time of service, in the most shameless manner, and insulting the ministers there, in the administration of their sacred office. They invaded public houses, uttering their wild exhortations, and foaming forth their mad opinions, like persons possessed; disturbing, also, the relations of private life, and meddling, everywhere, with matters beyond the pale of propriety, or even common modesty.

One Eccles, a Quaker tailor, who wrote a narrative of his persecutions, as he termed them, in 1659, declares that he felt bound to go to the steeple-house in Aldermanbury (as he called the church) on Sunday, "and take with him something to work upon, and do it in the pulpit, at their singing time; and he carried with him a pocket to sew." Making his way with proverbial slyness into the pulpit, he sat himself, he says, "upon the cushion with his feet upon the seat where the priest, when he has told out his lies, doth sit," and pulling out his pocket, went to work. Was it not a marvellous persecution, that the people thus disturbed, should have taken this insane zealot before a magistrate for punishment?

George Fox himself, entered "a steeple-house," and cried out to the minister, in the time of divine service, "come down, thou deceiver;" and on another occasion, approaching Lichfield, he pulled off his shoes and walked barefoot through the place, crying out "woe to the bloody city." But even men like these were mild and decent, in comparison with others of their sect,

who were carried away by the wildest impulses of phrenzy and fanaticism, putting the followers of Mathias even to the blush; and against such public disturbers as these, the colony laws were directed.

These laws were at first mild and gentle, and in 1659, Plymouth, by statute, made a proposition to the Quakers, that if they would depart out of their jurisdiction within six months, no fines should be exacted of them; promising that such of them as were poor should be supplied out of the public treasury. And to show the desire they had of preserving their own institutions merely, within their own jurisdiction, banishment from the Province, was in almost all cases, the first penalty prescribed for offences of this character. As measures of a mild nature were of no effect, the laws became more stringent, and it was then enacted, that if "ranters, Quakers, and other such vagabonds," should come within any town, they might be seized and whipped with a rod, not exceeding fifteen stripes, and a pass given them to depart out of the government. Associate this law with the image of the gentle Friend of our day, with his modest coat and quiet manners, and it becomes absurd. But associate it with Mathias, wandering about the streets of New York, uttering his disgusting blasphemies to curious crowds and deceived proselytes, and I think you would certainly bestow upon him at least fifteen stripes with a rod before you gave him a pass to depart from the government. But if our ancestors were too severe in their measures for the suppression of "ranters, and such like vagabonds," they were not a whit more severe than the English themselves; for we find that one James Naylor, a convert of George Fox, the great founder of the sect, was condemned to death for his extravagancies by the House of Commons, in 1656. Even the mild and ex-

cellent William Penn himself could hardly tolerate them; saying that they were troublesome to the better sort, and furnished an occasion for the looser to blaspheme.

In considering the character and conduct of those who lived and conducted the affairs of government, with the administration of its laws, two centuries ago, we should view them, not with eyes which have seen all the changes of thoughts, and all the improvements which that long period has produced, but they should be judged by the sentiments which prevailed in their time, and the lights by which they themselves were then guided. It is an easy thing now to ridicule the laws of Massachusetts concerning witchcraft, and hurl anathemas against the pious men who carried them into effect. But what was the state of public opinion throughout the whole Christian world upon this subject at that time? Was New England the only spot where laws of this nature were enacted? Had old England no statutes upon the subject? Or if they remained upon the record, had they, by disuse become obsolete and forgotten?

"To deny," says Blackstone, in his commentaries, written more than seventy years after all trials for this crime in New England had ceased; "to deny the possibility, nay, actual existence, of witchcraft and sorcery, is at once flatly to contradict the revealed word of God, in various passages both of the Old and New Testament; and the thing itself is a truth to which every nation in the world, hath in its turn borne testimony, either by examples seemingly well attested, or by prohibitory laws. The civil law punishes with death, not only the sorcerers themselves, but also those who consult them, imitating in the former the express law of God, 'thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.' And our

laws, both before and since the conquest, have been equally penal, ranking this crime in the same class with heresy, and condemning both to the flames."

Laws of the severest kind against this supposed offence, were passed in England, during the reign of Henry the Eighth; repeated and extended during that of James the First; and continued on their statute books down to the year 1736, when, in the ninth year of George the Second's reign it was enacted, that prosecutions should not, from that time forward, be carried on against any person for conjuration, witchcraft, enchantment, or sorcery; leaving however, upon the face of the law itself, an implied belief in their existence.

Who was Sir Matthew Hale, and when did he live? He was the Chief Justice of the King's Bench at one period of his life, and died in the year 1676, one of the most learned, just, and upright of all the magistrates that ever presided in an English court. And did he never try witches? Why, under his administration, and those of other learned and high minded judges of that time, more persons were put to death for this crime of witchcraft, in a single county of England, in a brief space, than ever suffered in all the States of New England, from the time of their settlement to the day when the delusion passed away, and, as I trust, for ever from the annals of mankind. No execution for conjuration or sorcery ever took place in New England, I believe, after the year 1693; but in old England, death continued to be inflicted for the same offences as late as 1722; showing conclusively that the crime had not its "local habitation and name" in Massachusetts alone.

But how much have we improved, upon the score of superstition, even in these enlightened times? In what days of New England history can you find anything so monstrous and revolting as the Mormon superstition,

crime or folly, which is now before your eyes? When did Jemima Wilkinson flourish? And where did a reverend fanatic speak to deluded crowds in unknown tongues? No! credulity and superstition are not confined to particular periods or places; but are of all times, and in every part of the world; and happy are they who escape their influence.

In paying a tribute to the merits of our dead ancestors, let not their modesty and freedom from ambition be forgotten. To discharge their duty before God and man was their only aspiration. Power and place offered no temptations to their chastened minds. No matter in what condition man, under ordinary circumstances may be placed, whether as the Inca of Peru, surrounded by ingots of gold and pyramids of silver, or as the poverty-stricken sachem of a northern tribe, without wealth, or comfort, or outward signs of magnificence; power is nevertheless the strongest temptation to ambitious souls. In the desire for its possession, all other earthly regards are absorbed; fraud, violence, and corruption, are invoked for its acquirement; the endearments of home, the consciousness of right, the obligations of virtue, and the sanctions of religion are all forgotten, while the human energies are concentrated into one fierce and inextinguishable motive. For it, man spurns the rights of his fellow man; disregards the obligations of duty; despises present retribution, and tempts that which is to come.

In what strong contrast with all that we see exhibited, day by day, upon the busy theatre of human affairs at this time, does the conduct of the Pilgrims appear? Simple, unambitious, conscientious, and devoted; considering power as a burden which all were bound to endure, they assumed its cares without coveting its honors. There was no strife among them as

to which should be greatest. Far from it. William Bradford having been repeatedly elected Governor, "got off" on one occasion, "by importunity." "If this appointment," said he, "was an honor or benefit, others beside himself should partake of it; if it were a burden, others beside himself should help to bear it." Nor was this feeling peculiar to him, for we find that in the year 1632, it was solemnly enacted at Plymouth, "that if then, or thereafter," any were elected to the office of Governor, and would not stand to the election, nor hold and execute the office for his year, that then, he be amerced in twenty pounds sterling, fine. And if any were elected to the office of Counsel, and refused to hold the place, that he be amerced in ten pounds, sterling." There is some reason to suspect, however much we may have adhered to the customs of our Pilgrim ancestors, that in this particular, we are somewhat degenerated.

We have thus seen who the first planters of New England were, and the causes which led to the great enterprise of establishing colonies upon our north-Atlantic shores. We have seen that they were men imbued with morals, sound and practical, though severe; of principles high-minded and pure, though firm and unyielding; of a religious faith and temperament, heated perhaps, by zeal to observances over-strict and formal: yet kind, tolerant and forgiving. We have seen them everywhere carrying out the purposes and fulfilling the designs for which they emigrated. The darkness of the forest gave way before the vigorous strokes of the woodman; the hum of the mill was mingled with the dash of the waterfall; the noise of the hammer was heard in the solitude of the desert, and the lowing of herds penetrated to the abodes of the wolf and the panther; the hill-side reflected back the gleam of the ploughshare, and the plains waved with the

golden plumage of the harvest; the wild incantations of the savage gave place to psalms of thanksgiving and the song of praise; while civilization advanced everywhere over the land, sounding its glad voice, and pouring out its blessings.

The progress of those little bands, from small beginnings to considerable communities; from these communities to separate and independent States; and from such States, to a harmonious union of all their descendants, under one common government, wisely constructed, powerfully maintained, and eminently respectable; may be easily traced, when the sources of the mighty current, flowing so steadily on, are once well known.

The principles inculcated by our fathers, the education they bestowed upon their children, and the habits of patience, long-suffering, and perseverance in which they were trained, could not fail to have an influence, deep and abiding, upon their characters. Standing by their chartered rights on all occasions, when attacked, conscious that they were entitled to the immunities and privileges for which they had toiled so long, and suffered so much, the Pilgrims and their descendants were not likely to submit with tameness to wrongs and oppressions, come from what source they might.

The contests in which they were involved with the natives, after the termination of Philip's war, the blood which they poured from their veins, and the desolations which came upon their borders, had been occasioned, for the most part, by controversies between the mother-country and her European neighbors, in which the colonies were compelled to take part. But they "remembered that they were Englishmen," and bore their portion of the burthens of war with patience and courage, murmuring at none of these things; for wherever

the British flag waved on this continent, the sons of New England could be found marshalled under it, and standing side-by side with their kinsmen.

But their sympathies were always on the part of liberty, and from the beginning, they were essentially republican. Hence, though not engaged in the conflict between the king and his parliaments, their hearts were always with the people. They rejoiced in their success, they mourned over their misfortunes; nor was it a day of fasting and prayer in the colonies, when the news came that the independent churches had established for themselves equality of rights, in the land where they were originally formed.

"Full little did I think," exclaimed that stout old Puritan, Governor Bradford, "full little did I think that the downfall of the bishops, with their courts, their canons, and ceremonies, had been so near when I first began this writing, in 1630; or that I should have lived to have seen or heard the same. And do ye now see the fruits of your labors, ye little band amongst the rest, the least amongst the thousands of Israel? But who hath done it? Even He, who sitteth upon the white horse: who is called faithful and true, and judgeth and fighteth righteously. It is He that treadeth the wine press, and hath upon his garment and upon his thigh a name written, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords!"

After that great revolution, which was the prelude merely, to the still greater one, which finally expelled the Stuarts from the British throne, the people of New England steadily adhered to their early principles, and hence they furnished a refuge to such of King Charles' judges as escaped to their country, desolate and forlorn. They did not look upon them as regicides, who had murdered their sovereign, but in the language of

Bradshaw's epitaph, as a part of "that band of heroes and patriots, who had fairly and openly adjudged Charles Stuart, tyrant of England, to a public and exemplary death; thereby presenting to the amazed world, and transmitting down, through applauding ages the most glorious example of unshaken virtue, love of freedom and impartial justice, ever exhibited on the blood-stained theatre of human action!"

These principles, and these sentiments, they maintained, and in Boston boldly avowed and acted upon, even before tidings of the expulsion of James from his throne had reached their glad and expecting ears. As good citizens, as obedient subjects, they remained during the reigns of his daughters, and the first two of their successors from Hanover; cherishing their free institutions, and, what was more, maintaining their independent sentiments with the unconquerable resolution of intelligent minds.

How unwise then in the mother country; how dangerous to wound the feelings of attachment which bound the descendants of the Pilgrims to the early home of their fathers. How unjust to attempt to restrain their energies, circumscribe their powers, and subdue their spirit. Were men like these ever intended to be mere "hewers of wood and drawers of water," for taskmasters on the other side of the Atlantic? Were the sons of the Pilgrims like the children of Issachar, "a strong ass couching down between two burdens?" Were they likely to "see that rest was good, and the land pleasant," and so "bow their shoulders to bear, and become servants unto tribute?" No, no. England should have remembered that "Judah was a lion's whelp, and that his hand would be in the neck of his enemies."

A writer, to me unknown, who composed a preface

to an edition of Hubbard's wars, printed in Boston, shortly before the battle of Bunker's Hill, speaking of his ancestors, observes, that however they may have been misrepresented, they were men of whom the world was not worthy. "According to the usual course of things," says he, "in this depraved and mutable state, their descendants, at this day, as might be expected, have, in a measure, departed from that simplicity of manners by which their renowned ancestors were distinguished. We, of this province, have been called upon, from an early period, to defend our lives and property against more distant savages. Our trust has been in our fathers' God, and hitherto, he hath delivered us. Our frontier settlements are exposed to savage invasion; and, though we trust not in our own bow, we are all armed and prepared for a defensive war!"

Who were the savages hinted at here, as nearer than those more distant ones, who had formerly assailed the frontier settlements? Against whom did the descendants of the Pilgrims then stand, all armed and prepared for a defensive war? Could not those, who controlled the destinies of Britain, hear the mutterings of the distant thunder, in these audible breathings-out of a suppressed, but concentrated and indomitable spirit? Could nothing but the fierce lightning of the battle, and the peltings of the pitiless storm of war arouse them to the recollection, that the fathers of these men were Englishmen, who came over the great ocean, and that their children would perish in this wilderness, rather than bear anything here, which would not be borne at home?

The same spirit which had planted the colonies, sustained and supported them through the whole Revolutionary struggle; so desolating, so unequal, so fierce, and unrelenting. The history of that event is so remarkable, when carefully examined, as to excite aston-

ishment, if not incredulity; and if an overruling Providence ever did interpose directly in the affairs of men, surely, its cloud by day, and pillar of fire by night, may be seen and traced through all the long and wearisome years of that eventful contest.

Severed then, and forever, were the silver cords, which bound distant, but affectionate colonies to their parent country. The golden bowl had been broken at the fountain. With ruthless violence it had been dashed down, and its fragments in after times, were never to be gathered up by the parent hand. But all the fruits of that vine which God had planted in the wilderness, were to remain to the descendants of those who had nurtured and nourished it, even with their tears and with their blood. Its branches were destined to shoot forth and spread out, and extend and blossom in the unknown and unthought-of depths of that vast continent, where its roots had struck so firmly and so deep.

Equal rights and equal privileges for all men, were then and there secured; and as I trust, made safe and enduring for ever. Freedom of thought, freedom of action under proper restraints, the inestimable gift of self-government, were each and all of them bestowed upon us by our fathers, at the close of that great drama, in which they, and the principal nations of Europe were finally actors. They established institutions, which we are bound by all the sacred obligations of filial affection, of parental reverence, and common gratitude, to preserve and maintain, and hand down to those who may come after us. And by all these great and hallowed recollections, we will maintain and preserve and hand them down, that no reproach may come upon us or our generation. That education we have received, we will transmit; that language taught to us, we will

teach to others; those principles in which we have been wrapped as with a mantle, we will bequeath to posterity, as the last, best gift, which one generation can bestow upon another.

The seeds sown by the Mayflower, shall be borne and wafted on the gentle winds of heaven, to every part of this vast continent, to spring up thirty, sixty, and an hundred fold, in the blossoms of that glorious and never-dying plant.

The dove which was sent out from the Ark, was to explore the face of the waters, to see where rest could be found for the sole of her foot. The dove which went forth from the Mayflower, carried in her beak a leaf of the olive which was to be planted, and take root, and grow and flourish, after the great waters of toil, and suffering, and trial, and Revolution, should have subsided.

The land is visible to us on every side, fertile and pleasant as the garden of the Lord. It was given to us as an inheritance; as an inheritance we will preserve it. Our tears did not water it; our blood did not nourish it; our toil did not smooth down its surface; but we are bound to it by the blood, and the tears, and the toil of our fathers; and by all these sacred obligations we will guard it.

The great orator of our time, and of his race, in his eloquent and profoundly philosophical discourse, delivered at Plymouth in the year 1820, speaking of his own native and beloved New England, expresses himself in these words:

"Instead of being confined to its former limits, her population has rolled backward and filled up the spaces included within her actual local boundaries. Not this only, but it has overflowed those boundaries and the waves of emigration have pressed farther and farther

towards the West. The Alleghany has not checked it, the banks of the Ohio have been covered with it. Two thousand miles westward from the rock where their fathers landed, may now be found the sons of the Pilgrims, cultivating smiling fields, rearing towns and villages, and cherishing the patrimonial blessings of wise institutions, of liberty and religion." "It may be safely asserted that there are now more than a million of people, descendants of New England ancestry, living free and happy in regions which, hardly sixty years ago, were tracts of unpenetrated forest. Nor do rivers, or mountains, or seas, resist the progress of industry and enterprise; and ere long the sons of the Pilgrims will be upon the shores of the Pacific."

This prophecy, made just twenty-seven years ago, has become history within that brief space of time. The million of the descendants of New England parentage here referred to, may, in all probability, be found in Ohio alone. The boundaries of the great rivers have been overleaped. The sterile plains, and still more sterile hills, beyond the Mississippi, have been traversed. The barrier of the Alleghanies has presented no resistance; the Rocky Mountains themselves have been scaled; the stormy Cape has been doubled; and now the sons of the Pilgrims stand upon the shores of the Pacific. They stand there with no eye turned towards the rising sun, except for the cheering warmth of his kindred rays. They stand there with no fainting resolution, no faltering thought of return. As their march was westward, so, with an intrepid front, they follow the sun in his flight, and look out upon the broad Pacific to see in what distant land he hides his fading beams. That piercing gaze will never cease until the mystery has been solved. The isles of

the sea will be measured; the spherical form of the globe itself be proved by American exploration; and the Anglo-Saxons of this continent, steadily pursuing the onward progress of their career, will put a girdle around the earth, and yet come back to the Rock of Plymouth, from whence they originally set forth.



THE FOUNDERS, GREAT IN THEIR UNCONSCIOUSNESS

HORACE BUSHNELL, D.D.

1849

HORACE BUSHNELL

(1802-1876.)

Out of a life of seventy-four years Dr. Horace Bushnell had but twenty-five of activity in his chosen work. These were spent in the North Church, Hartford, but their influence went far beyond its circle and opened a broader vision for his generation and for this. Outside his work as student and teacher, Dr. Bushnell was a citizen of such stamp that Hartford honors his memory as of one whose work has left on the town its distinct mark. It was in the year of his address before the New England Society—1849—that his book "God in Christ" appeared. This work raised to its fiercest height the storm of adverse criticism that throughout his life met this independent thinker. Dr. Bushnell's address is less rhetorical than many of the orations of this collection, less eloquent than others of Dr. Bushnell's speeches, yet it is virile in style and original in thought. One can fancy the gleam of the dark eyes as he talked of the great men of the past, of the great days of the future, in words not unworthy of his own brave and vigorous spirit, nor of the Tabernacle whose walls had heard and were yet to hear mighty voices.

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with due observances to celebrate, each year, this twenty-second day of December, as the day *Conditorum Reipublicæ*. Be it evermore a day, such as may fitly head the calendar of our historic honors; a day that remembers with thoughtful respect and reverence the patience of oppressed virtue, the sacrifices of duty, and the solemn fatherhood of religion;—a register also of progress, showing every year by what new triumphs and results of good, spreading in wider circles round the globe, that Being whose appropriate work it is to crown the fidelity of faithful men, is Himself justifying your homage, and challenging the homage of mankind.

Meantime, be this one caution faithfully observed, that all prescriptive and stipulated honors have it as their natural infirmity to issue in extravagant and forced commendations, and so to mar not seldom the reverence they would fortify. We pay the truest honors to men that are worthy, not by saying all imaginable good concerning them: least of all can we do fit honor, in this manner, to the fathers of New England. It as little suits the dignity of truth, as the iron rigor of the men. If it be true, as we often hear, that one may be most effectually "damned by faint praise;" it may also be done as fatally, by what is even more unjust and, to genuine merit, more insupportable, by over-vehement and undistinguishing eulogy. We make allowance for the subtractions of envy; but when love invents fictitious grounds of applause, we imagine some fatal defect of those which are real and true. There is no genuine praise but the praise of justice:

> "For fame impatient of extremes, decays
> Not less by envy, than excess of praise."



In this view, it will not be an offence to you, I trust, or be deemed adverse to the real spirit of the occasion, if I suggest the conviction that our New England fathers have sometimes suffered in this manner—not by any conscious design to over-magnify their merit, but by the amiable zeal of inconsiderate and partially qualified eulogy. In particular, it has seemed to me to be a frequent detraction from their merit that results are ascribed to their wisdom, or sagacious forethought as projectors, which never even came into their thoughts at all; and which, taken only as proofs of a Providential purpose working in them, and of God's faithful adherence to their history, would have yielded a more reverent tribute to Him, and raised them also to a far higher pitch of sublimity in excellence. The very greatness of these men, as it seems to me, is their unconsciousness. It is that so little conceiving the future they had in them, they had a future so magnificent—that God was in them in a latent power of divinity and world-disposing counsel which they did not suspect, in a wisdom wiser than they knew, in principles more quickening and transforming than they could even imagine themselves, and was thus preparing in them, to lift the whole race into a higher plane of existence, and one as much closer to Himself.

And just here is the difficulty that most consciously oppresses me in the engagement of the present occasion. It is to praise these great men justly—to say what is fit to them and not unfit to God. It is to make unconsciousness in good the crown of sublimity in good; to set it forth as their special glory, in this view, that they executed by duty and the stern fidelity of their lives, what they never propounded in theory, or set up as a mark of attainment—so to meet the spirit of the occa-

sion, and to raise in you the fit measure of enthusiasm, by the sober wine alone of justice and truth.

Do I then deny what has been so often observed in the great characters of history, that they commonly act their part under a visible sense or presentiment of the greatness of their mission? Is it a fiction that they are thus exalted in it, made impassible, borne along as by some fate or destiny, or, to give it a more Christian name, some inspiration or call of God? Nothing is more true; it is in fact the standing distinction, the sublimity itself of greatness.

> "Souls destined to o'erleap the vulgar lot,
> And mould the world unto the scheme of God,
> Have a fore-consciousness of their high doom."

Ignorant of this, we cannot understand what greatness is. To us it no longer exists. But we need, in the acceptance of a truth so ennobling to human history, to affix those terms and restrictions under which it is practically manifested, else we make even history itself fantastic or incredible.

Whoever appears to assert any great truth of science or religion, wanted by his age, ought to feel an immovable conviction that the truth asserted will prevail, else he is no fit champion. But as regards the particular effects it will produce in human society; these he cannot definitely trace. He can only know that, falling into the great currents of causes, complex and multitudinous as they are, some good and beneficent results will follow, that are worthy of its divine scope and order. In like manner, the hero of an occasion, exalted by the occasion to be God's instrument, we may believe is sometimes gifted with a confidence that is



nearly prophetic, and by force of which he is able to inspire others with a courage equal to the greatness of the encounter. Thus it was that Luther, in virtue of a confidence that other men had not, became the hero of the Reformation. But when we speak of inventions, institutions, policies, migrations, revolutions, which are not single truths or occasions, but inaugurations of causes that can reveal their issues only in the lapse of centuries, the projectors and leaders in these can be sure, at most, only of the grand ideal that inspires them; but by what medial changes and turns of history God will bring it to pass, or in what definite forms of social good it will finally clothe itself, they can but dimly conceive.

And this is what I mean, when I speak of the unconscious, or undesigning agency of the fathers of New England, considered as the authors of those great political and social issues which we just now look upon as the highest and crowning distinctions of our history. Their ideal was not in these, but in issues still farther on and more magnificent, to which these are only Providential media or means. Occupied by the splendor of these medial stages of advancement, and unable to imagine any thing yet more glorious to be revealed hereafter, we conclude that we have reached the final result and historic completion of our destiny; and then we cast about us to ask what our sublime fathers attempted, and settle a final judgment of their merits. Sometimes we smile at their simplicity, finding that the highest hope they conceived in their migration, was nothing but the hope of some good issue for religion! We secretly wonder, or, it may be, openly express our regret, that they could not have had some conception of the magnificent results of liberty and social order that were here to be revealed. And in this view, we

often set ourselves to it, as a kind of filial duty, to make out for them what we so much desire.

Who of us, meantime, is able, for once, to imagine that the shortness may be ours, the prophecy and the greatness theirs? We want them to be heroes, but we cannot allow them to be heroes of faith. This indeed is a great day for heroes, and our literature is at work, as in a trade, upon the manufacture. But it will some time be discovered that, in actual life, there are two kinds of heroes—heroes for the visible, and heroes for the invisible; they that see their mark hung out as a flag to be taken on some turret or battlement, and they that see it nowhere, save in the grand ideal of the inward life; extempore heroes fighting out a victory definitely seen in something near at hand, and the life-long, century-long heroes that are instigated by no ephemeral crown or more ephemeral passion, but have sounded the deep base-work of God's principle, and have dared calmly to rest their all upon it, come the issue where it may, or when it may, or in what form God will give it. The former class are only symbols, I conceive, in the visible life of that more heroic and truly divine greatness in the other, which is never offered to the eyes in forms of palpable achievement. These latter are God's heroes—heroes all of faith; the other belong to us, flaming as *dilettanti* figures of art in romances; protruding as bipedal gods in the windy swell of pantheistic literature; or it may be, striding in real life and action over fields of battle and pages of bloody renown. If our New England fathers do not figure as conspicuously in this latter class of heroes as some might desire, may they not sometimes be seen—when the main ideal of religion is fulfilled—to have been the more truly great because of the remoteness and the sacred grandeur of their aims? And if the

political successes in which, as Americans, we so properly indulge our pride, are but scintillations thrown off in the onward sweep of their historic aims and purposes, little honor can it do them to discover that these scintillations are the primal orbs and central fires of their expectation.

Let us offer them no such injustice. They are not to be praised as a tribe of successful visionaries, coming over to this new world, in prophetic lunacy, to get up a great republic and renovate human society the world over. They propound no theories of social order. They undertake not, in their human will or wisdom, to be a better Providence to the nations; make no promise of the end they will put to all the human ills, or of melting off the ice of the poles to cap them with a "boreal crown" of felicity.

Had they come to build a new future, in this manner, by their will, according to some preconceived theory of their head, the first awful year of their settlement would have broken their confidence, and left them crying, as home-sick children, for some way of return to their country. The

> ———"craven scruple
> Of thinking too precisely of the event,—
> A thought which, quartered, hath but one part wisdom,
> And ever three parts coward"—

would have shaken their fortitude with an ague as fatal as that which, in the first dreadful winter, assailed the life of their bodies—giving us, in their history, one other and quite unnecessary proof, that man is the weakest and most irresolute of beings when he hangs his purpose on his expectations. But coming in simple duty, duty was their power—a divine fate in them,

whose thrusting on to greatness and triumphant good, took away all questions from the feeble arbitrament of their will, and made them even impassible to their burdens. And they went on building their unknown future, the more resolutely because it was unknown. For, though unknown, it was present in its power—present, not as in their projects and wise theories, but as a latent heat, concealed in their principles, and works, and prayers, and secret love, to be given out and become palpable in the world's cooling, ages after.

Nor is this suggestion of a latent wisdom or law present in their migration, any conceit of the fancy; for as in the growth of a man or a tree, so also in the primal germ of nations and social bodies, there is a secret Form or Law present in them, of which their after-growth is scarcely more than a fit actualization or development. This secret germ, or presiding form of the nascent order, has the force also of a creative, constitutive instinct in the body, building up that form by a wisdom hid in itself; though conceived, in thought, by no one member. By this instinctive action languages are struck out as permanent forms of thought, in the obscurest and most savage tribes, squared by the nicest principles of symmetry and grammatic order, having hid in their single words whole chapters of wisdom that, some thousands of years after, will be opened by a right explication, to the astonished gaze of the philosophic student. By the same instinctive germinal force, unconsciously present in a people, the future institutions and forms of liberty will be constructed; just as the comb of the hive is built by the instinctive geometry of the hive, though not by the geometric science of any one or more single bees in it. And somewhat in this manner it was that our institu-

tions were present in the fathers and founders of our history. They had in their religious faith a high constructive instinct, raising them above their age and above themselves; creating in them fountains of wisdom deeper than they consciously knew, and preparing in them powers of benefaction that were to be discovered only by degrees and slowly to the coming ages. If you will show them forth as social projectors or architects of a new democracy, they stubbornly refuse to say or do any thing in that fashion. They are found protesting rather against your panegyric itself. Or if they have come to your acquaintance overlarded in this manner, so that you really regard them as the successful and deliberate revolutionizers of the modern age, you will need to wash off these coarse pigments and daubs of eulogy, as with nitre and much soap, and set them before you shining in the consecrating oil of faith, before you can truly conceive them as the fathers of American history. Their greatness is the unconscious greatness of their simple fidelity to God—the divine instinct of good and of wisdom by which God, as a reward upon duty, made them authors and founders of a social state under forms appointed by Himself.

It has been already assumed in this general outline of my subject, that the practical aim or ideal of our fathers, in their migration to the new world, was religion. This was the star of the East that guided them hither. They came as to the second cradle-place of a renovated Messiahship. They declare it formally themselves, when they give, as the principal reason of their undertaking, "the great hope and inward seal they had of laying some good foundation for the propagating and advancing the kingdom of Christ, in these remote parts of the world."—*Young's Chronicles*, p. 47.

It appears, however, that they had a retrospective reference, in their thoughts, as well as the prospective expectation here stated. Thus, it is affirmed by Mr. Hildersham, who had full opportunity to know their precise designs, that the colonists, as a body, before coming over, "agreed in nothing further, than in this general principle—that the reformation of the Church was to be endeavored according to the word of God."—*Cotton Mather*, p. 18. But precisely what, or how much they intended by this, will be seen nowhere else, with so great clearness, as in the ever memorable parting address which Robinson made to the Pilgrims, at their embarkation. Here we behold the real flame of their great idea. He said:

"I charge you before God and his blessed angels, that you follow me no further than I have followed Christ. And if God shall reveal any thing to you, by any other instrument of his, be as ready to receive it as you ever were to receive any thing by my ministry; for I am confident that God hath more truth yet to break forth out of His holy word. I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the Reformed churches, who have come to a period in religion, and will go no further than the instruments of their reformation. The Lutherans cannot be driven to go beyond Luther; for whatever part of God's will he hath further imparted by Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it. And so also the Calvinists stick where Calvin left them—a misery much to be lamented. For though they both were shining lights in their times, yet God hath not revealed his whole will to them. Remember now your church covenant, whereby you engage with God and one another, to receive whatever light shall be made known to you from His written word. For it is not possible that the Christian world is so lately come out of such thick anti-

Christian darkness, and that full perfection of knowledge should break forth at once."—*Young's Chronicles*, p. 396–7.

A most remarkable passage of history, in which this truly great man is seen asserting a position, at least two whole centuries in advance of his age. His residence abroad, among so many forms of opinion and of order, has quickened in his mind the germ of a true comprehensive movement. He also perceives the impossibility that the full maturity of truth and order should have burst forth in a day, as distinctly as a philosophic historian of the nineteenth century. The Reformation, he is sure, is no complete thing—probably it is more incomplete than any one has yet been able to imagine. And then he has the faith to accept his own conclusion. Sending out the little half-flock of his church, across the wide ocean, he bids them go to watch for light; and there, in the free wilderness of nature, unrestrained by his own teachings, to complete, if possible, the unknown measure of Holy Reformation.

This was the errand he gave them, and in this we have the fixed ideal of their undertaking. And they meant by "reformation," all that God should teach them and their children of the coming ages, by the light that should break forth from His holy word—all that was needed to prepare the purity and universal spread of Christian truth, and open to mankind the reign of Christ in its full felicity and glory. They fixed no limits. It might include more than they at present thought, or could even dare to think. Still they had courage to say—"Let the Reformation come in God's measures, and as He himself will shape it." And for this, they entered, with a stout heart, upon the perils and privations of their most perilous undertaking. Doubtless they had the natural feelings of men,

but they were going to bear the ark of the Almighty, and could not painfully fear. Robinson had said—and he knew what was in them—"It is not with us as with other men, whom small things discourage, and small discontents cause to wish themselves home again."—*Young's Chronicles*, p. 61. Confidence most sublime! justified by a history of patience equally sublime. We shall see before I close, whether the errand of religious reformation, thus accepted, was an illusion, or whether it contained, in fact, the spring of all our political successes, and of other and still greater that are yet to come.

Let us pause a moment here and change the scene. We will leave the "pinched fanatics" of Leyden, as they are sometimes called, weeping their farewell on Robinson's neck, and turn ourselves to England. Ascending out of the dull and commonplace level of religion, we will breathe, a moment, in the higher plane of wisdom and renowned statesmanship. The philosopher and sage of St. Albans, hereafter to be celebrated as the father of modern science, sits at his table, in the deep silence of study, preparing a solemn gift of wisdom for his countrymen. His brow hangs heavy over his desk, and the glow of his majestic face, and the clear lustre of his meditative eye, reveal the mighty soul discoursing with the inward oracle. The noble property-holders and chartered land-companies of the realm are discoursing, every where, of the settlement of colonies in the new world, and discussing the causes of failure in the settlements heretofore attempted—he has taken up the theme, and is writing his essay "Of Plantations." And the advice he offers to their guidance is summarily this—Make a beginning, not with "the scum of the people," but with a fair collection of single men, who

are good in all the several trades of industry. Make as much as possible of the spontaneous products of the country, such as nuts and esculent roots; but expect to support the plantation, in great part, by supplies from the mother country, for the first twenty years, and let the supplies be dealt out carefully "as in a besieged town." "As to government, let it be in the hands of one, assisted with some counsel, and let them have commission to exercise martial laws with some limitations." "When the plantation grows to strength, then it is time to plant with women as with men."

Need I stay to imagine, before an American audience, what kind of history must follow a plantation ordered in this manner—a plantation without the family state, without the gentle strengthening influence of woman, governed by a single head, under martial law!

Behold the little Mayflower rounding, now, the southern cape of England—filled with husbands and wives and children, families of righteous men, under "covenant with God and each other" "to lay some good foundation for religion:"—engaged both to make and to keep their own laws, expecting to supply their own wants and bear their own burdens, assisted by none but the God in whom they trust. Here are the hands of industry! the germs of liberty! the dear pledges of order! and the sacred beginnings of a home!

That was the wisdom of St. Albans—this of Leyden. Bacon is there—Robinson is here. There was the deep sagacity of human statesmanship—here is the divine oracle of duty and religion. O religion! religion! true daughter of God! wiser in action than genius itself in theory! How visible, in such a contrast, is the truth, that whatever is wisest in thought and most heroic in impulse, flows down upon men from the summits of religion—and is, in fact, a divine birth in souls! We

can only say of her as the poet of woman herself—rejected here by the masculine wisdom of theory, and welcomed by religion as a needed support in her sturdiest trials of duty—

> **"All higher knowledge, in her presence, falls**
> **Degraded. Wisdom, in discourse with her,**
> **Loses, discountenanced, and like folly shows."**

We are not, then, to conceive, and must not attempt to show, that our fathers undertook the migration with any political objects in view; least of all as distinctly proposing to lay the foundations of a great republic. Their end was religion, simply and only religion. Out upon the lone ocean, feeling their way cautiously, as it were, through the unknown waves, exploring, in their busy fancies and their prayers, the equally unknown future before them, they as little conceived that they had in their ship the germ of a vast republic that, in two centuries, would command the respect and attract the longing desires of the nations, as they saw with their eyes the lonely wastes about them whitening with the sails and foaming under the swift ships of that republic, already become the first commercial power of the world. The most sanguine expectation of theirs I have any where discovered, which, however, was not political, but religious, was ventured by Gov. Bradford, viz.—"That as one small candle may light a thousand, so the light kindled here may, in some sort, shine even to the whole nation!" This one small candle lighting the thousands of all England, is not quite as bold a figure of enthusiasm now as it was when it was uttered, and will probably be somewhat less extravagant, a hundred years hence, than now. No! they cross the sea in God's name only, sent by Him, as they believed, to be

the voice of one crying in the wilderness—Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. But whither those straightened paths will lead, and in what shape the new kingdom of the Lord will come, they as little conceive as John the Baptist himself.

Let us not be surprised, then, neither let it be any derogation from their merit, if we find them actually opposed, in thought or speculative view, to the very opinions and institutions, now regarded as being most distinctively American. In this I partly rejoice; for some of the distinctions we boast, it is their most real praise, not to have sought or accepted. Thus we boast that we have made solemn proof to the world of the great principle, that civil government has its foundation in a social compact—that it originates only in the consent of the governed—that self-government is the inalienable right of every people—that true liberty is the exercise and secure possession of this prerogative—that majorities of wills have an inherent right to determine the laws—and that government by divine right is only a solemn imposture. I will not deny that, in some very partial and qualified sense, these supposed doctrines of ours may be true. But taken in the more absolute sense, in which they are boasted by many, they compose a heap of as empty and worthless chaff as ever fed the conceit of any people in the world.

What are formal compacts, what is self-government, what are majorities of wills, taken as foundations of civil order? What stronger bond in these, to hold a community, than in those recent compacts made to share the gold of our western Ophir—all dissolved, as by a breath of air, the moment the adventurers touch the shore? Or, if we speak of right, what right is there of any kind, which is not divine right? Or,

dropping all such refinements, what truth can there be in abstract principles of order, discovered by us, which make every other government that has existed in the world, for six thousand years, an imposture, or a baseless usurpation?

But if it be conceived that there are three distinct orders of government, adapted to three distinct stages of social advancement—the government of force, the government of prescription, and the government of choice—and then that the particular terms of order just named are most appropriate and happiest for us, taken as modes or machinery of government, and not as theoretic principles and moral foundations; if we say these will best accommodate our liberties, and secure *us* in the high position to which God has raised us, it is well. But then we need to add that law is law, binding upon souls, not as human will, or the will of just one more than half the full grown men over a certain age, but a power of God entering into souls and reigning in them as a divine instinct of civil order, creating thus a state—perpetual, beneficent, the safeguard of the homes and of industry, the condition of a public feeling and a consciously organic life. This it is that makes all government sacred and powerful, that it somehow stands in the will of God; nay, it is the special dignity and glory and freedom of our government, that it rests, so little, on the mere will or force of man, so entirely on those principles of justice and common beneficence which we know are sacred to God. And it is the glory also of our founders and first fathers that they prepared us to such a state. Had they managed to weave nothing into our character more adequate than we sometimes discover in our political dogmas, we should even have wanted the institutions about which we speculate so feebly, and should have been as hopeless of any

settled terms of order, as we now are confident of our baseless and undigested principles.

I cannot withstand the temptation to recite, just here, another passage from Robinson. I do it, partly because it so exactly meets the genius of our institutions, and reveals so beautifully the moral springs of our history, and partly because it prepares a way so aptly for other suggestions yet to be offered. He gives the Pilgrims on their departure, a written letter of advice to be carried with them, in which are contained the following remarkable words—words which I could even wish were graven in tablets of stone, as the words of a father before Washington, and set up over the doors of our Congress, our State Legislatures, our town halls and political assembly rooms, there to stand, meeting the eyes of our people as long as the nation exists—certain always of this, that when the spirit of the words is wholly gone, the nation will exist no longer.

"Lastly, whereas you are to become a body politic, using civil government amongst yourselves, and are not furnished with any persons of special eminency above the rest [no knights or noble orders] to be chosen into office of government, let your wisdom and godliness appear, not only by choosing such persons as do entirely love and will diligently promote the common good, but also in yielding unto them all due honor and obedience in their lawful administrations; not beholding the ordinariness of their persons, but God's ordinance for your good; nor being like the foolish multitude, who more honor the gay coat [understand the stars and ribbons of nobility] than either the virtuous mind of the man, or the glorious ordinance of the Lord. But you know better things, and that the image of the Lord's power and authority, which the

magistrate beareth, is honorable in how mean persons soever. And this duty you may the more willingly and conscionably perform, because you are, at least for the present, to have only them for your ordinary governors, which yourselves shall make choice of for that work."—*Young's Chronicles*, p. 95.

But, while our founders stand right, when viewed in relation to what is most really fundamental in our institutions, we must not expect them to concur in all that we now regard as most properly and distinctly American.

They had no schemes of democracy to execute. They were not, in fact, or in their own view, republicans in their ideas of government. When Robinson's doctrine of church order was assailed as being a scheme of Christian democracy, he repelled the imputation as a slander, insisting, instead, that it was a plan of order "plainly aristocratical."—*Punchard*, p. 348. They were all, to a man, royalists and true Englishmen—pleased with the hope of "endeavoring the advancement of his Majesty's dominion."—*Cotton Mather*, p. 6. Some of them delighted in being able to write "*Mr.*" before their names, and the others would have cast out any man as a leveller and disorderly person, who dared to controvert the validity of that high distinction. Does any one the less certainly know that their whole scheme of principle and order was virtually and essentially republican, even from the first?

They as little thought of raising a separation of church and state as of planting a new democracy. They accepted in full and by formal reference the English doctrine on this subject, and Robinson even professed his willingness to accept the "oath of supremacy," which acknowledges the king as the rightful head

of the church. When a new settlement or town was planted, they said, not that the settlers were become a body politic, but that they were "inchurched." And when Davenport preached on the terms of suffrage, the problem stated was, "how to order a frame of civil government in a plantation whose *design* is religion."—*Bacon*, p. 289.

And yet we can look back now and see as distinctly as possible, that their very doctrine of church-membership must necessitate a final separation of church and state. For, if none but the true members of Christ can be included in the church, and none but such as are included can have the right of suffrage, then it must shortly appear that many good neighbors and virtuous sons and brothers are reduced to the condition of aliens in the commonwealth. Accordingly, we find that the settlers of the Hartford Colony, who had begun to see the pernicious consequences of the restricted suffrage in Massachusetts, in the beautiful constitution they adopted—the first written constitution of a purely representative republican government known to human history—opened the right of suffrage to all whom the several towns might elect as freemen. And thus, in less than twenty years after the settlement of Plymouth, the separation of church and state is visibly begun—a step is taken which can possibly issue in this alone, though the result is not completely and formally reached, till a hundred and fifty years have passed away.

I wish it were possible to claim for our fathers the honor of a free toleration of religious opinions. This it would seem that they might have learned from their own wrongs and sufferings. But they were not the men to think of finding their doctrines in any woes of their flesh. They had, in fact, a conscience against

toleration, lest the state, "whose end is religion," should seem to connive at false doctrines and schismatic practices. Therefore, when Cromwell was proposing toleration in England, the Synod of Massachusetts even protested against the measure as licentious. And one of their ministers, the eccentric pastor of Ipswich, was stirred up to publish in England, a most violent diatribe against it. He delighted in the old maxim that "true religion is *ignis probationis*,"—a test of fire. Indeed this narrow-spirited man had lived in the midst of toleration, upon the continent, and had not discovered its Christian beauty. "I lived," he says, "in a city where a Papist preached in one church, a Lutheran in another, a Calvinist in a third; a Lutheran one part of the day, and a Calvinist the other, in the same pulpit. The religion of that place was but motley and meagre, and their affections leopard-like."—*Cobbler of Agawam*, p. 5. Alas! for the brave pastor of Ipswich, how clear is it now, that the toleration he so much dreaded really belonged to all but the rather testy prejudices that he took for a part of his religion. The old *ignis probationis*, too, whose smoke had so lately been wafted over England from Smithfield and Tyburn—which however he did not mean, I trust, to commend in its most literal and orthodox sense—is gone out for ever the world over. And as to the "leopard-like" religion, just that which compelled a separation of Church and State, has doubtless compelled a sufferance also of this, even in his own parochial Ipswich itself. Or if free opinion be a leopard, spotting over the Church, or dissolving it into so many motley groups of division, it will ere long be seen that this unruly leopard is fulfilling the prophecy, forgetting his instincts of prey and schism, and lying down with the kids of love, in a catholic and perennial unity.

It need scarcely be added, that our fathers had as little thought of a separation from the mother country and as little desire of founding an independent commonwealth, as of the other distinctions just named. England was their home, they loved the monarchy. They would even have doubted their piety itself, had they found a single unloyal thought in their bosoms. And yet they were compelled to be jealous, even from the first, of any too close implication with the political affairs of the mother country, lest it should finally involve the security of their liberties. They formally declined, in this view, to connect themselves with Cromwell's Parliament by any application to it, and also to appear by deputies in the Westminster Assembly of Divines.—*Bancroft*, vol. i. pp. 450–1. It may be taken also as a singular and most ominous fact, that the Hartford Colony in arranging the new constitution just alluded to, made no mention either of king or parliament. This constitution required an oath of allegiance directly to itself, and even asserted a supreme power—"In which General Court shall consist the *supreme power* of the Commonwealth."—*Trumbull*, i. p. 532. And this supreme power they, in fact, exercised for ever after; subject to no negative, under governors of their own choice, creating their own tribunals and holding them without appeal, and even openly resisting the royal levies as an infringement of their rights. Here was, in fact, a little, independent, unconscious republic, unfolding itself by the banks of the Connecticut, on its own basis, under its own laws; so that when the war of independence came, instead of being dissolved by the state of revolution and required to reorganize itself, it stood ready in full form for action, and was able, in the first twenty-four hours after the outbreak, to set twenty thousand men upon the march, fully appointed

with officers and arms. The people had never set up for independence. They were loyal—in their way. But they had been sheltered under the very singular privileges of their charter, as well as by their more retired position; and had actually grown apart, unconsciously and by force of their own moral affinities, into a free republic. The condition of Rhode Island was similar: and the same general process was going on also in the other colonies, only under many restraints from royal governors and the qualified privileges of their charters.

Now there is a class of writers and critics in our country, who imagine it is quite clear that our fathers cannot have been the proper founders of our American liberties, because it is in proof that they were so intolerant and so clearly unrepublican often in their avowed sentiments. They suppose the world to be a kind of professor's chair, and expect events to transpire logically in it. They see not that casual opinions, or conventional and traditional prejudices are one thing, and that principles and morally dynamic forces are often quite another; that the former are the connectives only of history, the latter its springs of life; and that if the former serve well enough, as providential guards and moderating weights, overlying the deep geologic fires and subterranean heavings of the new moral instincts below, these latter will assuredly burst up, at last, in strong mountains of rock, to crest the world. Unable to conceive such a truth, they cast about them, accordingly, to find the paternity of our American institutions in purely accidental causes. We are clear of aristocratic orders, they say, because there was no blood of which to make an aristocracy; independent of king and parliament, because we grew into independence

under the natural effects of distance and the exercise of a legislative power; republican, because our constitutions were cast in the moulds of British law; a wonder of growth in riches, enterprise, and population, because of the hard necessities laid upon us, and our simple modes of life.

And the concurrent action of these causes must not be denied, we only must not take them as the true account of our successes. As good accidents were enjoyed elsewhere as here. There is the little decayed town of St. Augustine, settled by a Spanish colony even earlier, by some years, than Boston, which nevertheless we were just now called to rescue, by a military force, from the incursions of the savages! There are Mexico and the South American states, colonized by Spain, even a hundred years prior to the settlement of Plymouth,—when Spain too was at the height of her glory, and even far in advance of England, as regards the state of wealth and civil order,—fellow-republics indeed in name, but ignorant still of what liberty is, thirty years after they have gotten the right to it; poor, unprogressive, demoralized by superstition, and the oldest and strongest of them all actually contending, at this moment, with the aborigines, to save large towns and old and populous settlements from extermination! A glance in this direction is enough to show how much must be referred to the personal qualities and principles of the founders of a nation, how little to the mere accidents of circumstance and condition.

Besides, there is yet another view of this question, that has a far higher significance. We do not understand, as it seems to me, the real greatness of our institutions, when we look simply at the forms under which we hold

our liberties. It consists not in these, but in the magnificent Possibilities that underlie these forms, as their fundamental supports and conditions. In these we have the true paternity and spring of our institutions, and these, beyond a question, are the gift of our founders.

We see this, first of all, in the fixed relation between freedom and intelligence, and the remarkable care they had of popular education. It was not their plan to raise up a body of republicans. But they believed in mind as in God. Their religion was the choice of mind. The gospel they preached must have minds to hear it: and hence the solemn care they had, even from the first day of their settlement, of the education of every child. And, as God would have it, the children whom they trained up for pillars in the church, turned out also to be more than tools of power. They grew up into magistrates, leaders of the people, debaters of right and of law, statesmen, generals, and signers of declarations for liberty. Such a mass of capacity had never been seen before, in so small a body of men. And this is the first condition of liberty—the Condensation of Power. For liberty is not the license of an hour; it is not the butchery of a royal house, or the passion that rages behind a barricade, or the caps that are swung or the *vivas* shouted at the installing of a liberator. But it is the compact, impenetrable matter of much manhood, the compressed energy of good sense and public reason, having power to see before and after, and measure action by counsel—this it is that walls about the strength and liberty of a people. To be free is not to fly abroad, as the owls of the night, when they take the freedom of the air, but it is to settle and build and be strong—a commonwealth as much better compacted in the terms of reason, as it casts off more of the restraints of force.

Mutual confidence also is another and fundamental condition of free institutions. When a revolution breaks out in Mexico or in Paris, and the old magistracies are swept away, then immediately you shall see that a most painful question arises. Power must be deposited somewhere, with whom can it safely be trusted? Is it already in the hands of a committee? Then can this committee be trusted? Is a military commander set up to maintain order for a time with greater efficiency? What shall restrain the commander? Whoever is in power, the signs are jealously watched and morbidly construed. Well is it if some faction does not spring up to usurp the sovereign power, by a new act of revolution, justified by the pretext of saving the public liberties. Here you have the whole history of Mexico for the last thirty years, and, with fewer and less frequent alternations, the history of France, for a longer period. There is a fatal want of mutual confidence which nothing can supply, for the simple reason that there is nothing in which to confide. Power is known only as power, not as the endowment of obligation.

We are distracted by no such infirmity. We have never a thought of danger in the immense powers we confide to our rulers, simply because we can trust one another. We know so well the good sense and the firm conscience of our people as to be sure that, if any magistrate lifts the flag of an usurper and throws off the terms of his trust, all power will instantly drop out of his hands, and nothing will be necessary but to send a constable after him, even though he be the head of the army itself!

Now this matter of mutual confidence, fundamental as you see it to be to all strength in our institutions, or peace under them, has a very humble, unpretending

look. Scarcely ever has it crept into the notice of history. It has never been celebrated, I am sure, in any epic poem. No! but it is the silent exploit of a great history. Let Mexico ask for it, and offer the mortgage of her mines to buy it; let France question her *savans*, or lay it on the mitred priesthood at her altars to provide the new republic with this most indispensable gift, and alas! they cannot all together guess where it is, or whence it shall come. It is the silent growth of centuries, and there is no seed but the seed of Puritan discipline, out of which it was ever known to grow.

It is another and most necessary condition of free institutions, that the people should be trained to a special exercise of personal self-government. For it is the distinction of a republic that it governs less and less violently, substituting a moral in place of a public control. It is an approach towards no government, grounded, as a possibility, in the fact of a more complete government established in the personal habits of the subjects themselves. No republic could stand for a year, if it were compelled to govern as much, and with as much force as the English people are governed. Force must be nearly dispensed with. For,

> "What are numbers knit
> By force or custom? Man who man would be,
> Must rule the empire of himself; in it
> Must be supreme, establishing his throne
> Of vanquished will, quelling the anarchy
> Of hopes and fears, being himself alone."

Under this high possibility or condition, punishments are mitigated, the laws are fewer and more simple, the police are at their own private employments and come only when they are sent for, domestic fortresses

and standing armies nowhere appear to annoy the sense of liberty. A foreigner passing through the republic and hearing the sound of government in no beat of the drum, seeing the government in no parade of horse or foot or badges of police, concludes that the people are put upon their good behavior to-day; but when he is told that they were so yesterday, and will be to-morrow, he imagines that a doom of anarchy is certainly close at hand. The fears of Washington and the most sober patriots of his time, that our government had not strength enough to stand, were justified by all human example, and were not to be blamed. And yet the course of our legislation has, to this hour, been a course of discontinuance. We seem to be making an experiment, with how many laws it is possible to dispense. We are anxious many times for the result, and yet we do not suffer. We have gone a length in this direction which to any European will appear incredible. When I ponder, not without fears I confess, this sublime distinction of our country, holding in contrast what has been heretofore, and forecasting what God may be intending to bring forth here in the future ages, I am swallowed up in admiration of that power by which our faithful fathers were able to set our history on a footing so peculiar. They gave up their all to religion, knew no wisdom but simply to live for religion, and were it not for the intermixture of so many foreign elements which at present disturb our condition, we might almost imagine that in some good future, when the moral regimen of self-government is complete in our people, the external government of force and constraint may be safely dispensed with, the civil state subside in the fulness of the spiritual, and God alone be left presiding over the grand republic of wills by the sufficiency of his own divine Spirit and principles.

Closely allied with this great possibility of self-government, as a ground of republican order, is another, if indeed it be another, which must needs be prepared also. I speak of the displacement of loyalty, and the substitution of law. Loyalty is a sentiment, law a conviction or principle. One is the tribute yielded to a person, the other is the enthronement of an abstraction simply, or a formal statute. In the sentiment of loyalty, taken as a tribute of homage to high-born persons, to the starred noble, or the reigning prince of a royal house, there is a certain beauty which naturally fascinates the mind. The sentiment partakes of chivalry. In such a distribution of the social state, there is a fine show of distinctions that sets off a romance, or a play, and even gives to society itself the courtly air of a drama. Government is here seen in the concrete, set off by dress and title and scales of precedence, and the loyal heart rejoices in the homage it yields to the gods of the eye. Such a government is better adapted to a people generally rude and uneducated, or low in moral culture, because it is a government of show and sentiment, and not of reason. But, with all the captivating airs it has to the mere looker on, it is, in fact, a government of authorized caprice, and obedience a state, too often, of disappointed fealty. If it is pleasant to look upon the fine livery of a noble, it is far less so to be imprisoned as a public malefactor for a slight breach of the game law. The splendor of nobility is too often corruption; the protection, contempt and insult. Moreover, it will be found that a merely personal and sentimental homage is of a nature too inconstant or capricious ever to be confidently trusted. It may possibly hold a dog to his fidelity, but it never held a race of men. There, accordingly, has never been a government, standing on the basis of loyalty, that was not obliged to fortify

loyalty by a display of steel and of military squadrons, more conspicuous than its noble orders.

Now the problem is, in founding a republic, to prepare a social state without artificial distinctions, and govern it by abstractions and formal constitutions in place of persons. The "gay coat" of Robinson, the royal pageants and the starred nobility are withdrawn from the eye, and the laws and constitutions—in one view nothing but invisible abstractions or terms of public reason—must be set in that inward homage which can never be shaken. The problem, though it be the most difficult ever attempted in the history of mankind, is yet, for once, accomplished. Consider the terrible surging of party and passion, displayed in one of our Presidential elections. See a whole nation, vast enough for an empire, roused to the intensest pitch of strife and tearing, as it were in the coming out of a demon. The old Guelph and Ghibelline factions were scarcely more violent or implacable. But the day of election passes without so much as the report of an outbreak, and the day after the whole nation is as quiet as if there were but one mind in it—all by the power of Invisible Law! Nay, we had a President at the head of our great republic who had no party in the Congress, and few friends among the people. During the four whole years he occupied the seat of power, dispensing a patronage greater than that of the Queen of England, with not a soldier visible to assert the majesty of order, and yet without even the symptom of a disturbance. Never, in all the history of mankind, was displayed a spectacle of moral sublimity comparable to these four years of American history—sublimity the more sublime, because we were wholly unconscious of it ourselves, and had not even a thought that it could be otherwise!

And the fundamental cause, if you seek it, is that law with us is the public right and reason. It is mine, it is yours, and being for all as public reason, it is God's. To rebel against it, therefore, is to rebel both against ourselves and God. And if you ask whence came this conviction, how was it so firmly established? By the life, I answer, and the religion of our fathers. Whether true or false is not now the question, but their religion was a religion only of judgments and abstractions. For these they renounced comfort, country, property, and home. These they preached. On these they even fed their children. Honors and pageants of distinction were out of sight. They could not be saved in the easy drill of forms. No mitred order, no priesthood came between the worshipper and his God to act the patron for him, and be the conduit of heaven's grace to his soul. He must enter with boldness into the holiest himself. There was besides in Calvinism, as a religion, just that which would give abstractions the intensest power and the most awful reality to the mind. It took its beginning at the sovereignty of God. It saw all men lying in a common plane of equality below. The only princes it knew were God's elect. And this kind of knighthood it was no easy formality to gain. It was to believe and accurately hold and experimentally know the iron base-work of an abstractive theology. The mind was thrust into questions that compelled action—eternal decrees, absolute election, arbitrary grace, imputed sin, imputed righteousness. On these head anvils of abstraction the blows of thought must needs be ever ringing, and when the points were said to be cordially received, it was meant also that they were dialectically bedded in the framework of the man.

Hence the remarkable power of abstractions in the

American mind. The Germans can live in them as their day-dreams, but we can live upon them and by them as our daily bread. Our enthusiasm is most enthusiastic, our practical energy most energetic and practical just here—in what we do, or hope to do, under the application of great principles, whether of science, government, or religion. And thus it has come to pass that the gulf between loyalty and law is effectually crossed over. The transition is made, and we are set by it on a new and, as time will show, a much higher plane of history. In one view, there is something ungracious in our American spirit. We are nearly as ignorant of the loyal feeling as a tribe of wild animals —unrespectful often to worth and true precedence. And yet we have a feeling as truly national as any people in the world. If the traveller in England begins to count the pictured Oaks and Lions, the royal or princely names stuck upon all shows and shops of trade and chop-houses, and even petty wares, down to soaps and razors—riding always on "Royal" roads, sleeping at "Royal" inns, and washing in the water of some "Royal" aqueduct—if he is nauseated, for the time, by what appears to be the inexhaustible servility of that great people, he is sure to smile at his own impatience when he returns, and recall the sentence he had passed. He takes up the newspapers at his hotel, and finds how many headed by cognomens ingeniously compounded with "People," "Democracy," "Republic," "Constitution," "Independence," and "Nation." He runs his eye down the advertising columns and along the signboards of the street, and it falls on how many titles to patriotic favor, ranging in all grades, from the "People's Line" of steamboats and the ship "Constitution," down to the "Jefferson Lunch" and the "New Demo-

cratic Liniment." In one view, these demonstrations have a most ludicrous air; in another, they are signs of the deepest significance—showing that we, as truly as the most loyal of nations, have our public feeling; a feeling not the less universal and decided, because its objects are mostly impersonal.

And, by force of this public feeling, it is just now beginning to appear that the government of this vast and, as most persons would say, loosely compacted republic, is really the strongest government in the world. What can be stronger than a government that has no enemies, and the subjects of which do not desire and would not suffer a change? They have looked out from their fastnesses and the loop-holes of fortified order in Europe, prophesying our speedy lapse into anarchy; they have said, how can a people be governed without a personal embodiment of authority in princes and noble orders? But now, when their thrones are rocking on the underswell of popular movement, and their princes flying in fishermen's disguises from the splendid millinery that was to captivate the loyal eyes of their loyal people, they begin to cast a look across the ocean, to the new republic, whose impalpable throne of law is every where acknowledged by all as a friendly power—and is not this, they ask, the real strength and stability of order?

Yes, and so I trust in God it shall prove itself to the coming ages. When twenty years hence, and twenty years after that, the successive waves of liberty roll high across the fields of Europe, and the old prescriptive orders and powers are drifted onward and away till not even the wreck can be found, this better throne of law I trust shall stand, as the guardian to us and the promise to mankind of the freedom and the righteous peace they long for.

Do I then affirm that our fathers foresaw these magnificent results, now revealed in our political history? I have even made it a part of their greatness that they did not. They stood for God and religion alone. They asked for nothing, planned for nothing, hoped for nothing, save what should come of their religion. They believed in the Bible and in God's decrees, and they came over to profess the one and fulfil the other. They had not so much as thought of giving the universe or the world a "Revised Constitution." They did not believe in predestination by man—therefore had nothing in common with our modern prophets of "science," who promise to re-organize society from a point without and by a scheme imposed, not by any remedial forces of faith and duty, acting from within and through its secret laws. They did not begin at the point zero in themselves, or in their own human wisdom, but at duty; and they represent, at once, the infallible success and the majestic firmness of duty. Compared with the class of ephemeral world-renovators just named, they stand as the firm, granitic, heaven-piercing Needles, by the *mer de glace* of human unbeliefs and the unwisdoms of pretended science; and while that is cracking below in the frosts by which it is crystallized, and grinding down its bed of destiny, to be melted in the heat of practical life and be seen no more, they rise serenely, as ever, lifting their heads above the storm-clouds of the world, and stand—still looking up! They will do below only what they seek above. They will give us only the reward of their lives, and what may be distilled from their prayers. And in these, they give us all.

Ah! the sour, impracticable race, who, by reason of their sinister conscience, could not kneel at the sacraments, and must needs stand up before God Himself,

when kings and bishops kneeled; barbarians of schism, who revolted to be rid of the Christian civility of priestly garments; who could not be in the spirit on the Lord's day under the excellent prayers of the Parliament, and preferred to insult the king by dying, rather than to yield him an inch of Church reformation!—so they are described, and I am not about to deny that they made as many sharp points in their religion as Christian charity and true reason required. When God prepares a hammer, it will not be made of silk. If our fathers were uncomfortable men, what great character ever lived that was not an uncomfortable man to his times? If they cast off the decrees of Parliament, and took in the decrees of God in their place, was it not to be expected, both from what they had cast off and from what they had taken, that there would be a little more of stiffness and punctilious rigor in the issue than was requisite? Or, if they had found a true Pope in the Bible, what should follow, but a most literal obeisance, even to the slipper of the book? As the world too of past ages had received their salvation, with tremulous awe, in a little sprinkling of holy water, or a wafer on the tongue, and they had now learned to look for salvation in what they believed, what should they do but stand for their mere letters of abstraction, as exact and scrupulous, as if the words of faith had even as great dignity, as ablutions of the finger or a paste in the mouth? It could not be otherwise. That was no age for easy compliances and flowing lines of opinion. Whatever was done, must have the cutting edge of scruple and over-punctual severity. Only let our fathers be judged with that true historic sympathy, which is the due of all men, and I ask no more. Then it will even be confessed that, by the strictness which exceeded reason, they only proved that close fidelity and

sacred homage to reason, which is itself but a name for true spiritual honor and greatness. For

> ——"Rightly to be great
> Is not to stir without great argument,
> But greatly to find quarrel in a straw,
> When honor's at the stake."

I have spoken thus at length of the successes of our political and social history, for it is chiefly in these that we have our prominence before the world, and seem also to ourselves to have achieved results of the greatest brilliancy and magnitude. But my subject requires me to believe, and I think the signs also indicate that results are yet to come, far transcending these in their sublimity and their beneficent consequences to mankind. Indeed, what now we call results of history, seem to me to be only stages in the preparation of a Great and Divine Future, that includes the spiritual good and glory and the comprehensive unity of the race —exactly that which most truly fulfils the grand religious ideal of Robinson and the New England fathers.

Their word was "Reformation"—"the completion of the Reformation;" not Luther's nor Calvin's, they expressly say, they cannot themselves image it. Hitherto it is unconceived by men. God must reveal it in the light that breaks forth from Him. And this He will do, in His own good time. It is already clear to us that, in order to any farther progress in this direction, it was necessary for a new movement to begin, that should loosen the joints of despotism and emancipate the mind of the world. And in order to this a new republic must be planted, and have time to grow. It must be seen rising up in the strong majesty of freedom and youth, outstripping the old prescriptive world in enterprise and the race of power, covering the ocean

with its commerce, spreading out in populous swarms of industry—planting, building, educating, framing constitutions, rushing to and fro in the smoke and thunder of travel along its mighty rivers, across its inland seas, over its mountain-tops from one shore to the other, strong in order as in liberty, a savage continent become the field of a colossal republican empire, whose name is a name of respect and a mark of desire to the longing eyes of mankind. And then, as the fire of new ideas and hopes darts electrically along the nerves of feeling in the millions of the race, it will be seen that a new Christian movement also begins with it. Call it reformation, or formation, or by whatever name, it is irresistible because it is intangible. In one view, it is only destruction. The State is loosened from the Church. The Church crumbles down into fragments. Superstition is eaten away by the strong acid of liberty, and spiritual despotism flies affrighted from the broken loyalty of its metropolis. Protestantism also, divided and subdivided by its dialectic quarrels, falls into the finest, driest powder of disintegration. Be not afraid. The new order crystallizes only as the old is dissolved; and no sooner is the old unity of orders and authorities effectually dissolved, than the reconstructive affinities of a new and better unity begin to appear in the solution. Repugnances melt away. Thought grows catholic. Men look for good in each other, as well as evil. The crossings of opinion, by travel and books, and the intermixtures of races and religions, issue in freer, broader views of the Christian truth: and so the "Church of the Future," as it has been called, gravitates inwardly towards those terms of brotherhood in which it may coalesce and rest. I say not or believe, that Christendom will be Puritanized, or Protestantized; but what is better than either, it will be Chris-

tianized. It will settle thus into a unity, probably not of form, but of practical assent and love—a Commonwealth of the Spirit, as much stronger in its unity than the old satrapy of priestly despotism, as our republic is stronger than any other government of the world.

And this, I conceive, is the true issue of that "great hope and inward zeal" which impelled our fathers in the migration. Our political successes are but means to this magnificent end—instruments, all, and powers of religion, as we have seen them to be its natural effects and fruits. All kinds of progress, political and spiritual, coalesce and work together in our history; and will do so in all the race, till finally it is raised to its true summit of greatness, felicity, and glory, in God and religion. And when that summit is reached, it will be found that, as Church and State must be parted in the crumbling and disintegrating processes of freedom; so, in freedom attained, they will coalesce again, not as Church and State, but in such kind of unity as well nigh removes the distinction—the peace and love and world-wide brotherhood, established under moral ideas, and the eternal truths of God's eternal kingdom.

Glory enough, then, is it for our sublime Fathers, to have filled an office so conspicuous in the preparation of results so magnificent. I am not unaware of the defects in their character. Nay, I would rather see and confess, than to hide them; for, since we cannot be gods ourselves, it is better to be descended of a race of men than of gods. But, when I consider the unambitious sacrifice they made of their comforts and their country, how little they were moved by vagrant theories and projects of social revolution, how patient of hardships, how faithful to their convictions, how little they expected of men, how confidently they trusted their un-

known future to God, and, then, what honor God has put upon them, and what greater honor he is preparing for their name, before the good and the free of the blessed ages of the future; I confess that I seem even to have offended in attempting to speak their eulogy. Silence and a bare head are a more fit tribute than words. Or, if we will erect to them a more solid and yet worthier monument, there is none so appropriate as to learn from them, and for ourselves to receive, the principle they have so nobly proved, that—THE WAY OF GREATNESS IS THE WAY OF DUTY.

THE CONSTITUTION AND THE UNION

DANIEL WEBSTER

1850

DANIEL WEBSTER

(1782-1852.)

THE festival of 1850 was celebrated by the dinner only, but there Webster gave, in reply to the toast "The Constitution and the Union—their Chief Defender," what was really an oration and was published by the Society as had been the more formal addresses. This was reprinted in the annual report of 1885 and is also in Webster's collected works. No other address before the Society, save that of Dr. Holmes, five years later, reflects so clearly the temper of the times.

At the celebration of 1851 was received from Mr. Webster the greeting:

"We drink the health of the sons of New England. May Plymouth Rock stand every shock till time shall be no more."

No banquet was held the following year, a sign of the deep feeling over the death of the great New Englander in October, 1852.



RESPONSE

Mr. President, and Gentlemen of the New England Society of New York.

YE sons of New England! Ye brethren of the kindred tie! I have come hither to-night, not without some inconvenience, that I might behold a congregation whose faces bear lineaments of a New England origin, and whose hearts beat with full New England pulsations. I willingly make the sacrifice. I am here to attend this meeting of the Pilgrim Society of New York, the great offshoot of the Pilgrim Society of Massachusetts. And, Gentlemen, I shall begin what I have to say, which is but little, by tendering to you my thanks for the invitation extended to me, and by wishing you, one and all, every kind of happiness and prosperity.

Gentlemen, this has been a stormy, cold, boisterous, and inclement day. The winds have been harsh, the skies have been severe; and if we had been exposed to their rigor; if we had no shelter against this howling and freezing tempest; if we were wan and worn out; if half of us were sick and tired, and ready to descend into the grave; if we were on the bleak coast of Plymouth, houseless, homeless, with nothing over our heads but the heavens, and that God who sits above the heavens; if we had distressed wives on our arms,

and hungry and shivering children clinging to our skirts, we should see something, and feel something, of that scene, which, in the providence of God, was enacted at Plymouth on the 22d of December, 1620.

Thanks to Almighty God, who, from that distressed early condition of our fathers, has raised us to a height of prosperity and of happiness which they neither enjoyed, nor could have anticipated! We have learned much of them; they could have foreseen little of us. Would to God, my friends, that, when we carry our affections and our recollections back to that period, we could arm ourselves with something of the stern virtues which supported them, in that hour of peril, and exposure, and suffering! Would to God that we possessed that unconquerable resolution, stronger than bars of brass or iron, which strengthened their hearts; that patience, "sovereign o'er transmuted ill," and, above all, that faith, that religious faith, which, with eyes fast fixed upon heaven, tramples all things earthly beneath her triumphant feet!

Gentlemen, the scenes of this world change. What our ancestors saw and felt, we shall not see nor feel. What they achieved, it is denied to us even to attempt. The severer duties of life, requiring the exercise of the stern and unbending virtues, were theirs. They were called upon for the exhibition of those austere qualities, which, before they came to the Western wilderness, had made them what they were. Things have changed. In the progress of society, the fashions and the habits of life, with all its conditions, have changed. Their rigid sentiments, and their tenets, apparently harsh and exclusive, we are not called on, in every respect, to imitate or commend; or rather to imitate, for we should commend them always, when we consider the state of society in which they had been adopted, and in which

they seemed necessary. Our fathers had that religious sentiment, that trust in Providence, that determination to do right, and to seek, through every degree of toil and suffering, the honor of God, and the preservation of their liberties, which we shall do well to cherish, to imitate, and to equal, to the utmost of our ability. It may be true, and it is true, that in the progress of society the milder virtues have come to belong more especially to our day and our condition. The Pilgrims had been great sufferers from intolerance; it was not unnatural that their own faith and practice, as a consequence, should become somewhat intolerant. This is the common infirmity of human nature. Man retaliates on man. It is to be hoped, however, that the greater spread of the benignant principles of religion, of the divine charity of Christianity, has, to some extent, improved the sentiments which prevailed in the world at that time. No doubt the "first-comers," as they were called, were attached to their own forms of public worship, and to their own particular and strongly cherished religious opinions. No doubt they esteemed those sentiments, and the observances which they practised, to be absolutely binding on all, by the authority of the word of God. It is true, I think, in the general advancement of human intelligence, that we find, what they do not seem to have found, that a greater toleration of religious opinion, a more friendly feeling towards all who profess reverence for God and obedience to his commands, is not inconsistent with the great and fundamental principles of religion; I might rather say, is itself one of those fundamental principles. So we see in our day, I think, without any departure from the essential principles of our fathers, a more enlarged and comprehensive Christian philanthropy. It seems to be the American destiny, the mission which has been in-

trusted to us here on this shore of the Atlantic, the great conception and the great duty to which we are born, to show that all sects, and all denominations, professing reverence for the authority of the Author of our being, and belief in his revelations, may be safely tolerated without prejudice either to our religion or to our liberties.

We are Protestants, generally speaking; but you all know that there presides at the head of the supreme judicature of the United States a Roman Catholic; and no man, I suppose, through the whole United States, imagines that the judicature of the country is less safe, that the administration of public justice is less respectable or less secure, because the Chief Justice of the United States has been, and is, a firm adherent of that religion. And so it is in every department of society amongst us. In both houses of Congress, in all public offices, and all public affairs, we proceed on the idea that a man's religious belief is a matter above human law; that it is a question to be settled between him and his Maker, because he is responsible to none but his Maker for adopting or rejecting revealed truth. And here is the great distinction which is sometimes overlooked, and which I am afraid is now too often overlooked, in this land, the glorious inheritance of the sons of the Pilgrims. Men, for their religious sentiments, are accountable to God, and to God only. Religion is both a communication and a tie between man and his Maker; and to his own master every man standeth or falleth. But when men come together in society, establish social relations, and form governments for the protection of the rights of all, then it is indispensable that this right of private judgment should in some measure be relinquished and made subservient to the judgment of the whole. Religion may exist

while every man is left responsible only to God. Society, civil rule, the civil state, cannot exist, while every man is responsible to nobody and to nothing but to his own opinion. And our New England ancestors understood all this quite well. Gentlemen, there is the "Constitution" which was adopted on board the Mayflower in November, 1620, while that bark of immortal memory was riding at anchor in the harbor of Cape Cod. What is it? Its authors honored God; they professed to obey all his commandments, and to live ever and in all things in his obedience. But they say, nevertheless, that for the establishment of a civil polity, and for the greater security and preservation of their civil rights and liberties, they agree that the laws and ordinances, acts and constitutions, (and I am glad they put in the word *"constitutions,"*)—they say that these laws and ordinances, acts and *constitutions*, which may be established by those whom they shall appoint to enact them, they, in all due submission and obedience, will support.

This constitution is not long. I will read it. It invokes a *religious* sanction and the authority of God on their *civil* obligations; for it was no doctrine of theirs that civil obedience is a mere matter of expediency. Here it is:—

"In the name of God, Amen: We, whose names are underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, king, defender of the Faith, &c., having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and honor of our king and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid, and by virtue hereof do enact, constitute, and

frame such just and equal laws and ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the colony; unto which we promise all due submission and obedience."

The right of private judgment in matters between the Creator and the individual, and submission and obedience to the will of the whole, in all that respects civil polity, and the administration of such affairs as concerned the colony about to be established, they regarded as entirely consistent; and the common sense of mankind, lettered and unlettered, everywhere establishes and confirms this sentiment. Indeed, all must see that it is the very ligament, the very tie, which connects man to man, in the social system; and these sentiments are embodied in that constitution. Discourse on this topic might be enlarged, but I pass from it.

Gentlemen, we are now two hundred and thirty years from that great event. There is the Mayflower.[1] There is an imitation on a small scale, but a correct one, of the Mayflower. Sons of New England! there was in ancient times a ship that carried Jason to the acquisition of the Golden Fleece. There was a flag-ship at the battle of Actium which made Augustus Cæsar master of the world. In modern times, there have been flag-ships which have carried Hawke, and Howe, and Nelson of the other continent, and Hull, and Decatur, and Stewart of this, to triumph. What are they all, in the chance of remembrance among men, to that little bark, the Mayflower, which reached these shores on the 22d day of December, 1620? Yes, brethren of New England, yes! that Mayflower was a flower destined to be of perpetual bloom! Its verdure will

[1] Pointing to a small figure of a ship, in confectionery, representing the Mayflower, that stood before him.

stand the sultry blasts of summer, and the chilling winds of autumn. It will defy winter; it will defy all climate, and all time, and will continue to spread its petals to the world, and to exhale an ever-living odor and fragrance, to the last syllable of recorded time.

Gentlemen, brethren of New England! whom I have come some hundreds of miles to meet this night, let me present to you one of the most distinguished of those personages who came hither on the deck of the Mayflower. Let me fancy that I now see Elder William Brewster entering the door at the farther end of this hall; a tall and erect figure, of plain dress, of no elegance of manner beyond a respectful bow, mild and cheerful, but of no merriment that reaches beyond a smile. Let me suppose that his image stood now before us, or that it was looking in upon this assembly.

"Are ye," he would say, with a voice of exultation, and yet softened with melancholy, "are ye our children? Does this scene of refinement, of elegance, of riches, of luxury, does all this come from our labors? Is this magnificent city, the like of which we never saw nor heard of on either continent, is this but an offshoot from Plymouth rock?

'Quis jam locus . . . .
Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?'

Is this one part of the great reward for which my brethren and myself endured lives of toil and of hardship? We had faith and hope. God granted us the spirit to look forward, and we did look forward. But this scene we never anticipated. Our hopes were on another life. Of earthly gratifications we tasted little; for human honors we had little expectation. Our bones lie on the hill in Plymouth church-yard, obscure, unmarked, *secreted*, to preserve our graves from the

knowledge of savage foes. No stone tells where we lie. And yet, let me say to you who are our descendants, who possess this glorious country and all it contains, who enjoy this hour of prosperity and the thousand blessings showered upon it by the God of your fathers, we envy you not, we reproach you not. Be rich, be prosperous, be enlightened. Live in pleasure, if such be your allotment on earth; but live, also, always to God and to duty. Spread yourselves and your children over the continent, accomplish the whole of your great destiny, and if it be that through the whole you carry Puritan hearts with you, if you still cherish an undying love of civil and religious liberty, and mean to enjoy them yourselves, and are willing to shed your heart's blood to transmit them to your posterity, then will you be worthy descendants of Carver and Allerton and Bradford, and the rest of those who landed from stormy seas on the rock of Plymouth."

Gentlemen, that little vessel, on the 22d of December, 1620, made her safe landing on the shore of Plymouth. She had been tossed on a tempestuous ocean; she approached the New England coast under circumstances of great distress and trouble; yet, amidst all the disasters of her voyage, she accomplished her end, and she bore a hundred precious pilgrims to the shore of the New World.

Gentlemen, let her be considered this night as an emblem of New England, the New England which now is. New England is a ship, staunch, strong, well built, and particularly well manned. She may be occasionally thrown into the trough of the sea by the violence of winds and waves, and may *wallow* there for a time; but, depend upon it, she will right herself. She will ere long *come round to the wind, and obey her helm.*

We have hardly begun, my brethren, to realize the

vast importance to human society, and to the history and happiness of the world, of the voyage of that little vessel which brought hither the love of civil and religious liberty, and the reverence of the Bible, for the instruction of the future generations of men. We have hardly begun to realize the consequences of that voyage. Heretofore the extension of our race, following our New England ancestry, has crept along the shore. But now it has extended itself. It has crossed the continent. It has not only transcended the Alleghanies, but has capped the Rocky Mountains. It is now upon the shores of the Pacific; and on this day, or, if not on this day, then this day twelvemonth, descendants of New England will there celebrate the landing ——

(A Voice. "To-day; they celebrate it to-day.")

God bless them! Here 's to the health and success of the California Society of Pilgrims assembled on the shores of the Pacific. And it shall yet go hard if the three hundred millions of people in China, provided they are intelligent enough to understand any thing, shall not one day hear and know something of the rock of Plymouth too.

But, gentlemen, I am trespassing too long on your time. I am taking too much of what belongs to others. My voice is neither a new voice nor is it the voice of a young man. It has been heard before in this place; and the most that I have thought or felt concerning New England history and New England principles has been before, in the course of my life, said here or elsewhere.

Your sentiment, Mr. President, which called me up before this meeting, is of a larger and more comprehensive nature. It speaks of the Constitution under which we live; of the Union which has bound us together for sixty years, and made us the fellow-citizens of those

who settled at Yorktown and the mouth of the Mississippi and their descendants, and now, at last, of those who have come from all corners of the earth and assembled in California. I confess I have had my doubts whether the republican system under which we live could be so vastly extended without danger of dissolution. Thus far, I willingly admit, my apprehensions have not been realized. The distance is immense; the intervening country is vast. But the principle on which our government is established, the representative system, seems to be indefinitely expansive; and wherever it does extend, it seems to create a strong attachment to the Union and the Constitution that protect it. I believe California and New Mexico have had new life inspired into all their people. They feel themselves partakers of a new being, a new creation, a new existence. They are not the men they thought themselves to be, now that they find they are members of this great government, and hailed as citizens of the United States of America. I hope, in the providence of God, as this system of States and representative governments shall extend, that it will be strengthened. In some respects, the tendency is to strengthen it. Local agitations will disturb it less. If there has been on the Atlantic coast, somewhere south of the Potomac, and I will not define further where it is,—if there has been dissatisfaction, that dissatisfaction has not been felt in California; it has not been felt that side of the Rocky Mountains. It is a *localism*, and I am one of those who believe that our system of government is not to be destroyed by *localisms*, North or South. No; we have our private opinions, State prejudices, local ideas; but over all, submerging all, *drowning* all, is that great sentiment, that always, and nevertheless, *we are all Americans*. It is as Americans that we are known, the whole

world over. Who asks what State you are from, in Europe, or in Africa, or in Asia? Is he an American? Does he belong to the United States? Does that flag protect him? Does he rest under the eagle and the stars and stripes? If he does, all else is subordinate and of but little concern.

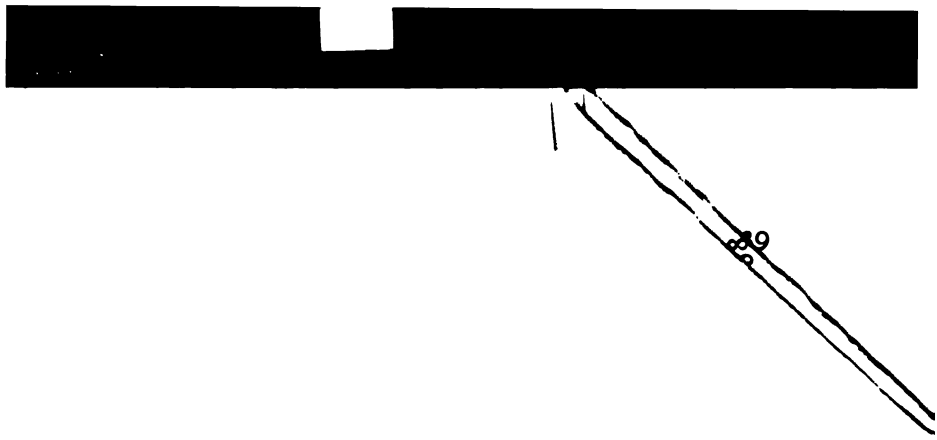
Now it is our duty, while we live on the earth, to cherish this sentiment; to make it prevail over the whole country, even if that country should spread over the whole continent. It is our duty to carry English principles, I mean, Sir, [turning to Sir Henry Bulwer,] Anglo-Saxon *American* principles, over the whole continent; the great principles of Magna Charta, of the English Revolution, and especially of the American Revolution, and of the English language. Our children will hear Shakspeare and Milton recited on the shores of the Pacific. Nay, before that, American ideas, which are essentially and originally English ideas, will penetrate the Mexican, the Spanish mind; and Mexicans and Spaniards will thank God that they have been brought to know something of civil liberty, of the trial by jury, and of security for personal rights.

As for the rest, let us take courage. The day-spring from on high has visited us; the country has been called back to conscience and to duty. *There is no longer imminent danger of dissolution in these United States.* We shall live, and not die. We shall live as united Americans; and those who have supposed they could sever us, that they could rend one American heart from another, and that speculation and hypothesis, that secession and metaphysics, could tear us asunder, will find themselves wofully mistaken.

Let the mind of the sober American people remain sober. Let it not inflame itself. Let it do justice to all. And the truest course, and the surest course, to

disappoint those who meditate disunion, is just to leave them to themselves, and see what they can make of it. No, Gentlemen; the time for meditated secession is past. Americans, North and South, will be hereafter more and more united. There is a sternness and severity in the public mind lately aroused. I believe that, North and South, there has been, in the last year, a renovation of public sentiment, an animated revival of the spirit of union, and, more than all, of attachment to the Constitution, regarding it as indispensably necessary; and if we would preserve our nationality, it is indispensable that this spirit of devotion should be still more largely increased. And who doubts it? If we give up that Constitution, what are we? You are a Manhattan man; I am a Boston man. Another is a Connecticut, and another a Rhode Island man. Is it not a great deal better, standing hand to hand, and clasping hands, that we should remain as we have been for sixty years, citizens of the same country, members of the same government, united all, united now, and united for ever? *That we shall be, Gentlemen.* There have been difficulties, contentions, controversies, angry controversies; but I tell you that, in my judgment,—

> "those opposed eyes,
> Which, like the meteors of a troubled heaven,
> All of one nature, of one substance bred,
> Did lately meet in th' intestine shock,
> Shall now, in mutual, well-beseeming ranks
> MARCH ALL ONE WAY."



THE PAST AND THE FUTURE

GEORGE S. HILLARD

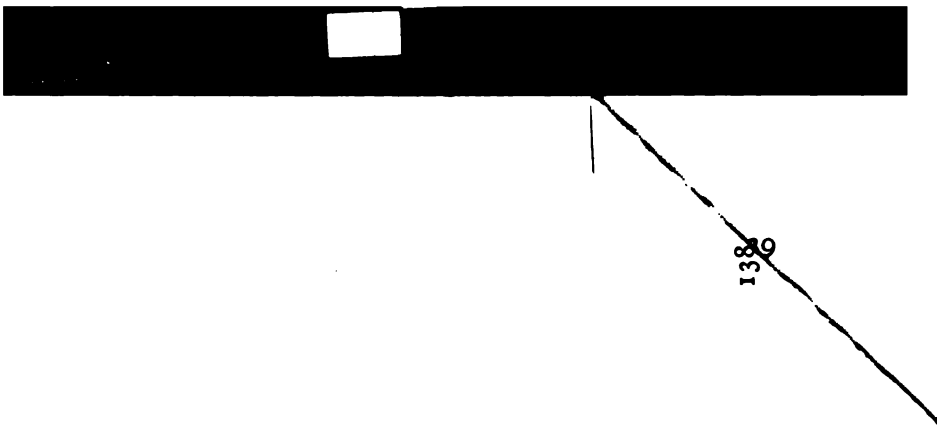
1851



GEORGE S. HILLARD

(1808-1879.)

Mr. Hillard, the speaker for the anniversary of 1851, was a well-known essayist, reviewer, and orator. He was an active citizen of Boston, president of the city council, and member of the Massachusetts Senate. The estimation in which he was held as a speaker is certified by his delivery of the oration at the Boston Memorial meeting for Mr. Webster. Mr. Hillard was connected at different times with the "Christian Register," the "Christian Examiner," the "New England Magazine," and the "North American Review." He was the editor of an edition of Edmund Spenser's works, and among his published writings are biographies of Captain John Smith and of George Ticknor, and the notable book of travels "Six Months in Italy."



DISCOURSE

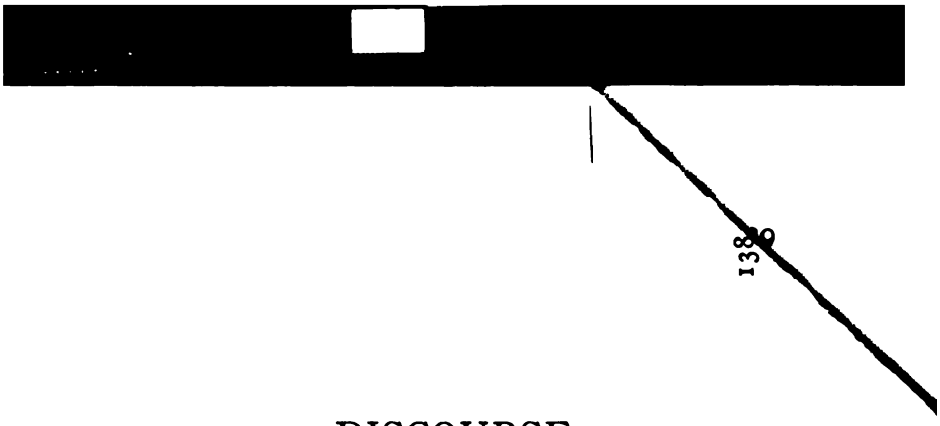
MAN is a being of "large discourse, looking before and after." From this power of living in the past and the future, his essential grandeur and dignity are derived. The life of the individual is but a momentary spark; but the life of humanity is a luminous web, flowing from the bosom of God, into which the hours of every day are woven. Through memory and hope, we are born to a great inheritance of records and promises; and poor indeed is the life which feeds only on the meagre harvest of the present. It is a proud privilege to be able to break away from this "bank and shoal of time," to seek what shall be in what has been, to turn experience into prophecy, and, with retrospective glance, discern in the mirror of the Past the airy shapes of the unborn Future.

The origin of our country lies in the open daylight of history. We cannot go back to that morning twilight of tradition, from which poetry draws so many of its themes and so much of its inspiration. Such forms as Arthur and the Cid, in whom the real and the fanciful meet and blend, like the mountain and the cloud upon the distant horizon, have no place upon our soil. The simple dignity of men like Carver, and Brewster, and Winthrop, can borrow no attractions from the hues of romance. If we lose something, so far as imagination is concerned, by the nearness and distinctness of the

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settlement of the country, we gain much upon the side of truth, in the moral dignity which was stamped upon the enterprise, in the exalted motives which led to it, and in those high qualities of mind and character by which its success was confirmed. If our early history does not furnish those picturesque contrasts, those wild struggles, those lawless manners, and those genial traits of homely nature, which, lying in the idealizing light of distance, become the sources from which poetry draws its ever new materials, it is a sufficient compensation to a manly spirit, to be able to say that the institutions of New England were founded in religious faith; that their progress was assured by the animating principle of civil liberty; that they were consecrated by a deep-seated respect for law, and enforced by lives of spotless purity. Other nations can trace back the beginnings of their social and civil state to earlier periods, through a longer succession of generations; but who can find them lying in higher sources than religion, liberty, and law?

This day is the birthday of a great people. It is dedicated to the Past and the Future. It is rescued from the grasp of common life, and set apart for serener contemplations and finer visions. The importunate and clamorous present is laid asleep. Our thoughts are disengaged from the splendid results of civilization and cultivation which lie about us. The irresistible power with which the vast interests and vivid excitements of a great city seize upon and subdue the spirit of man, is, for the moment, paralyzed. Your crowded warehouses; your stately mansions; your streets, through which such tides of life rush and foam; your noble rivers, shadowed by so many sails, and furrowed by so many keels, are shut out from the eye of the mind. Far other scenes unfold themselves to its

gaze. We see a desolate coast, white with the snows, and swept with the storms of winter. We see a solitary vessel, weather-stained and tempest-shattered. We see a band of men, women and children, shivering with cold, suffering from the effects of a long and rough voyage, and some already touched with mortal sickness—but all animated with the same expression of fortitude and faith, which gives a nobler dignity to the brow of manhood, a purer light to the eye of woman, and breathes a thoughtful air over the face of childhood itself. Behind them is the sea, before them is the forest, and above them is the sky. Danger, and solitude, and famine, and winter, are the grim shapes that welcome them to their unknown home. There are neither friendly faces, nor cordial greetings, nor warm embraces, nor food, nor shelter, in the howling wilderness before them. They are alone with their God.

The experiences by which these men and women have been ripened for the work which lies before them, embrace a large segment of all that circle of action and suffering by which humanity is trained and tempered. Few of the sorrows which try the firmness of man, or the love of woman, have been wanting in their lives. They have felt the wrath of enemies, the coldness of friends, the sharpness of persecution, and the dreary heart-ache of exile. Poverty and a low estate have hardly been accounted among their chief burdens. The necessities of their position have called forth whatever there was in them of fortitude, circumspection, vigilance, and prudence. Difficulties have obstructed their path, so numerous and so great, that nothing but the constant exercise of sagacity and self-command could have overcome them. Their life has been a long warfare against the oppression of power from without, and the promptings of what seemed weakness from within.

And as they have had great sorrows, so they have had great satisfactions. The pressure of persecution has bound their hearts together by a depth and fullness of sympathy such as can never grow in the air of happiness and prosperity. Domestic love—chaste, pure and warm—has soothed and sustained them, and the strong man, when ready to faint, has been upheld by the unconquerable faith and undying truth which animate and transfigure the feeble frame of woman. And, above all, they have been admitted to a closer walk with God than has been vouchsafed to men of higher place, more endowed with the goods of this world, more rich in carnal gifts and eye-attracting graces. He has bowed His heavens, and, passing by the princes and nobles of the earth, has spoken with them as friend speaks with friend. With them He has made a covenant, and they are the living ark to whose keeping His law is intrusted. In the watches of the night, in solitary wildernesses, upon the lonely ocean, have they heard His awful voice. Rapturous dreams, resplendent visions, celestial revelations have overshone their souls, and so erected and exalted their spirits, that the strong ones of the earth have been as dead men beneath their feet.

The Pilgrim Fathers of Plymouth—Englishmen by birth—belonged to that remarkable body of men, the Puritans, who, in the period between the Reformation and the Revolution of Sixteen hundred and eighty-eight, wrought such mighty works in Church and State, and had so large a hand in opening those channels in which the mind of England was ever after to run. I need hardly say that the name of Puritan leads us into a wide field of controversy, involving vital and enduring principles, both political and religious, in which every reflecting man, who speaks the speech of Eng-

land, is led to take one side or the other, according to his temperament and turn of mind. But though all the issues in this great contest are not yet, and never will be settled, yet upon many the silent verdict of history has been passed; and only obstinate prejudice or clamorous pertinacity will move for a rehearing. It is enough for us that the Puritans, as a body in English history, long assailed and defended with indiscriminate and partisan zeal, have reached a point of enlightened comprehension and candid judgment. There is a general consent among judicial minds as to their energy in action, and their constancy in suffering, as to the depth and fervor of their religious convictions and the prodigious power of speech, thought, and conduct, inspired by them, and especially as to the inestimable services which they rendered to the cause of civil liberty. Upon this last point the testimony of Hume, considering his total want of sympathy with the Puritans in politics, as well as religion, may be received as the very best evidence that could be put into the case.

Puritanism as an element of struggle in the history of England, and Puritanism as a constructive element in the formation and development of the institutions of New England, present points both of resemblance and diversity. In England, the Puritans were always in an attitude of protest and resistance. They set their faces against civil and ecclesiastical tyranny, against the power of the Bishops and the encroachments of the Crown, against the Court of High Commission and the Star-Chamber, against Strafford, and against Laud. They contended for liberty in things sacred and liberty in things secular, for liberty in prophesying and liberty in debate, for the liberty of the congregation and the liberty of the individual. They formed the party of progress, and embodied the principles of movement

and dissent. When a portion of them were transplanted to a new world, it was natural and probable to suppose that the impulse of resistance communicated at home would have proved a propelling motive abroad, that right would have been sought in a point the most remote from wrong, and that their sense of the abuses of power would have taken the form of impatience under necessary restraints. Reasoning from analogy, we should have supposed that the soil of New England would have been the scene of the wildest experiments in government, and that the land would have been like the land of Israel in those days when there was no king, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes. Such would have been the case, had our Puritans been the narrow-minded fanatics which, through ignorance or malice, they have sometimes been called. But the event was far unlike that which might have been anticipated; and nothing proves more conclusively that their experiences had not impaired the balanced wisdom of their minds, than the fact that these sufferers and exiles in the cause of liberty should have shown, from the moment they landed upon the soil of Plymouth, so profound a respect for the principle of law, and should have expressed that feeling so decisively in their early legislation. Reverence for authority, a stern sense of order, the submission of the one to the many, a horror of insubordination, and faith in elders and magistrates, were leading traits in the character of the Pilgrims. Indeed, they pushed the principle of law too far, and, in many instances, turned against the liberty of the individual that sharp edge of legislation, the smart of which they had so often felt in their own persons.

It is easy to praise the Puritan Fathers of New England; it is not difficult to blame them. We have met

here to honor, not to praise them; for to honor is not always to praise, and to praise is not always to honor. There are two aspects in which every man may be regarded. In the one case, we examine his fitness to accomplish some end foreign to himself; in the other, we inquire into his growth and development with reference to a self-contained end. In the one case, we ask, what can he do? In the other, what is he? Viewing these men with reference to an ideal standard of humanity, we admit their want of symmetry and proportion. Some qualities we should like to add, and others to take away. Their manners were severe, and their temper intolerant. While sternly breaking away from the seductions of the senses, they did not always escape the vices of hypocrisy and spiritual pride. They gave an undue importance to trifles, and exalted indifferent observances to the dignity of symbols. Their legislation was teasing and intrusive in its details, and in its spirit darkened by a mistaken sense of the perpetual obligation of the Mosaic Code. While they shut out from their hearts the refreshment that comes from the sense of beauty, they opened the door to those fierce and consuming excitements which waste the bosoms in which they rage. Their sympathies were neither cordial nor expansive, and they would not have been a comfortable people for any one, not of their own way of thinking, to have dwelt among. But when we view them with reference to their fitness for the task of colonizing New England, we find them wanting in no needful qualities, but, on the contrary, abounding in all. We then look upon them as a people raised up by God to do a great work, and trained to that high destiny by a corresponding discipline. We must admit that, as instruments for accomplishing the end that was set before them, they were hardly less than perfect. A

religious faith less intense, an enthusiasm less exalted, a constancy of purpose less firm, a softer fibre of soul, a more flexible temper of mind, could never have carried them through the dangers and difficulties which lay in the path of their enterprise. For this, the highest and strongest of worldly motives would have been found wanting. Neither the glow of patriotism, nor the love of power, nor the sense of honor, nor the passion for gain, could have borne the fearful experiences of the first five years of the Plymouth colony. These will enable men to dispense with luxuries, to submit to privations, and to encounter dangers: but when hunger is, day after day, gnawing at their hearts; when Winter is beating upon them with his icy flail; when Death is so busy among them, that the able-bodied can do little more than nurse the sick and bury the dead, unaided humanity will sink and fall under the burden. The support that will enable men to bear up under so tremendous a pressure, must come from Heaven and not from earth. Man must lay hold of the hand of God, and, aided by that, lift himself above himself, not merely casting aside his trials, but making them pedestals of exaltation. And if the elements were so mingled in the Pilgrim Fathers of New England, that they had every quality requisite for the work appointed unto them, so that none was wanting and none was excessive, do we not see that their previous discipline had been such, as to call forth all the powers that were essential, and, at the same time, to forbid the growth of those genial graces and winning accomplishments, which they are sometimes unthinkingly blamed for not possessing? That they were not fine gentlemen and elegant scholars, is true; but how could men acquire courtly manners or delicate learning, that had never breathed the air of security, had been obliged to steal

through life with the cry of pursuit ever following them upon the wind, had never been bidden to good men's feasts, nor slept on tranquil pillows? Poverty, persecution and exile, form those stern and strong virtues which are the protection and defence of communities, as the storms of winter blow vigor into the oak and the pine, whose rafters are hewn into forts, and churches, and houses; but the softer and gentler graces, which embellish a prosperous condition, bloom by the side of still waters, and in gardens sheltered from the sweeping blast.

While we acknowledge and lament that spirit of intolerance which darkens the memory of the Puritan Fathers of New England, we contend that upon this charge they should be tried by the standard of their own age, and not by that of ours. We honor men who are in advance of their times, but we have no right to blame those who are not. Moral truth is progressive as well as material. We do not censure the Puritans for having been ignorant of vaccination, or the expansive power of steam, and, practically, the world knew as little at that time of the great principle of toleration. So late as 1612, the fires of Smithfield were lighted for the burning of a heretic. Even Milton, in that splendid effusion of generous zeal, so far beyond his age—the Speech for the Liberty of unlicensed printing—stops short the glowing wheels of his eloquence in mid career, and expressly excludes Popery from the arms of that wide-embracing toleration which should clasp all Protestant sects. That the Puritans, who had fled from persecution, should themselves have persecuted, is a seeming inconsistency which the laws of the human mind easily explain. That the men, who are most prepared to suffer martyrdom, are the most inclined to inflict it, is no paradox to him who knows the nature of

faith and the power of zeal. The Puritans, from the beginning, were of this stern and uncompromising spirit. In their judgment, not only were their own views of doctrine and church government true, but all others were false. They could not live in the pleasant land of their birth, because they could not consent to tolerate what they deemed error. They had sacrificed everything that makes life sweet to the natural man, and fled into the wilderness, in order to found a pure church, such as the pure eyes of God might look upon with favor, and they felt that they had an exclusive right to those spiritual privileges which they had bought with so great a price. They had made the waste place a garden of the Lord, and they could not allow any weeds of heresy to take root in it. What equivalent had they to show for all they had renounced, and all they had suffered, if they were to encounter here the false doctrines and idolatrous practices which had made life intolerable to them at home? They held their own lives as nothing when weighed in the balance against the truth; and if, in defence of the truth, they inflicted death, they were equally prepared to meet it, had such been the will of God. Our own age has outgrown the axe and the fagot; but is the combination of an earnest faith and a tolerant spirit so very common, as to entitle us to sit in judgment upon the intolerance of the past? What we call toleration is commonly only another name for indifference. To have deep and fervid convictions in religion or politics, and at the same time to respect the intellectual rights of those who have come to different conclusions, is still the rarest and finest of unions.

That the Pilgrim Fathers, whose landing upon the shore of Plymouth we are this day commemorating, were men of an eminently religious spirit, and that the



motives which moved them to that enterprise were mainly of a religious origin, can be denied by no candid mind who examines the evidence contained in their own recorded statements, written with perfect simplicity, and at a time and under circumstances which make it impossible that they should have had any purpose of concealment or deception. In their view, the ties which bound them to God were far more important than those which bound them to any earthly object. The fervor of their zeal was in proportion to the depth and sincerity of their faith. They were penetrated with the most vivid sense of the real existence of those things that are spiritually discerned. The terrors and promises of the unseen world were ever darkening and brightening their path. The smiles and frowns of God were to them as visible, as those which a child sees upon the face of an earthly parent. Their daily life revolved upon the poles of spiritual truth.

A religious spirit is not to be confounded with a religious creed. It is quite possible for a man to assent sincerely to certain articles of religious faith, and yet live a worldly and irreligious life. Belief is an act of the mind; but a religious spirit is a state of the moral affections. It implies the constant guidance and restraint of motives flowing from religious convictions. It rests upon the ideas of the continued existence of the soul, a future state, and a personal God, against whose moral purity sin is an offence. Religious opinions are modified by the progress which the mind makes in secular knowledge and general intelligence. Religious truth is a flowing stream, and not a stagnant pool, and God's revelations are not, like stars, best discerned in the night of ignorance and credulity. The admirable Robinson, in his farewell sermon, told his people, in words which are as true this day as when they were

spoken, that "he was very confident the Lord had more truth yet to break out of his holy word." But the spirit of religion is ever essentially the same, just as we see the true spirit of scientific inquiry, alike in Roger Bacon, groping in the twilight of knowledge, and in Humboldt, walking in its noon-day blaze. That the Pilgrims were men of a profoundly religious spirit, is a fact quite irrespective of the wisdom or expediency of the particular acts and forms in which that spirit was expressed. History records no body of men, whose lives were more shaped and guided by the relations which exist between God and the human soul. It is no figure of speech, but a literal truth, to say, that the glory of God was the chief end of their existence, and that they found perfect freedom in entire submission to His law. The power which this principle of faith inspired, the constancy of purpose which it gave, the firm temper of soul which it infused, can never be told by vague rhetoric or impassioned declamation, but can only be felt by those who will read the record of the sufferings and privations of their early years, made at the time, and on the spot, as simply as if it had been the log-book of a coasting voyage. It tamed the rage of hunger, it softened the rigor of cold, it broke the sting of death. It was a cordial to the sick, a shield to the timid, a hope to the desponding, a staff to the feeble.

While we acknowledge with gratitude the beneficent influences of that religious faith which belonged to the Pilgrims, as Puritans, we should not forget what we owe to those ideas of civil liberty which were their inheritance as Englishmen. Though, to borrow their own quaint language, they had become well weaned from the delicate milk of their mother country; yet they had not lost the vigor drawn from that strong meat of Saxon freedom, which she had given them to eat.

They landed upon the shore of Plymouth, already instructed in the noble art of building up a state. Their brains were not heated with wild visions of ideal commonwealths, and they were not compelled to read the lines of wisdom upon the reverse side of their ill-woven systems. The liberty which they found upon the soil of America, awakened no giddy and tumultuous raptures, because it differed only in degree from that which they had known at home. They brought with them the habit of civil obedience and the instinct of political constructiveness. Persecution had stamped more deeply upon their hearts the noble principles expressed in the homely Latin of Magna Charta. They had sat upon juries; they had seen the judicial and executive functions of a state embodied in the justice of the peace and the constable. They knew the meaning of those proud words, the Commons of England. The very oppressions which they had suffered, had been under the forms of law. They brought with them whatever was vital and progressive in the institutions of England, and nothing of that which was obsolete and unsuited to their new sphere of action and duty. They left behind them the burdens of feudalism, the prerogatives of the crown, the privileges of the nobility, the laws of entail, the right of primogeniture, and the civil grasp of ecclesiastical tribunals. In the race that was set before them, they started without weight. They found here, cast into their laps, and without a struggle, more than their brethren in England could win after two revolutions.

The principles of civil liberty and religious faith which the Pilgrims, as Englishmen and as Puritans, brought with them, were the germs of those institutions which have made the New England States so respectable and so happy a community, and had so large an

influence, direct and indirect, upon the whole land. We have no reason to suppose that the Pilgrims themselves were at all conscious of the splendid procession of events that was to start from the Rock of Plymouth. They had no other object than to seek a safe asylum in a remote land, where they might worship God in peace, according to the dictates of their own conscience; and in His hands they submissively left the issue of their work. It seems to me that the enterprise itself wears a more natural dignity, and that the character of the Pilgrims becomes more simple and noble, if we accept their own statement of their motives and expectations as the plain truth, and do not seek to garnish it with modern inventions. The philosophy of history, so called, is apt to slide into mere speculation, and a succession of events, lying at a distance of two centuries, is sometimes seen to be linked together by a law of sequence which exists only in the observer's own mind. As the stars are grouped into constellations from dim resemblances which they suggest, so the bright points in history are made to assume shape and consistency, in obedience to arbitrary analogies. Not unto the Pilgrims, admirable as they were, is the honor due, but unto God, who turned their weakness into strength, and their sufferings into glory; who, from beginnings which, to merely human judgment, seemed to promise nothing but disaster and defeat, reared up a mighty people, whose future progress is beyond conjecture, as its past has been beyond parallel.

With the growth and increase of the various settlements in New England, the development of the principle of democracy becomes more and more marked; but we have no right to infer that the Pilgrims themselves, or their successors at Salem and Boston, ever imagined that it was their destiny to become the founders of great

democratic communities. The idea of the sovereignty of the people never presented itself to their minds; and if it had, it would have been received with very little favor. But it is none the less true, that from the beginning, the inevitable current of events swept towards democratic institutions, and that, with the elements that were at work, none other were possible. The great doctrine of the Reformation—justification by faith alone—had political as well as religious consequences. It changed the relations, not only between God and the soul, but between the state and the individual. He who had attained to peace through the pangs of a new spiritual birth—whom God, from the beginning, by virtue of His eternal decrees, had chosen and redeemed—could not but apply a searching spirit of inquiry to any system of polity which made him, while on earth, a passive instrument or a powerless slave. The views of the Puritan settlers upon church government and discipline, led them in the same direction. Congregationalism is the principle of democracy applied to the ecclesiastical state. When a body of men, gathered together under the name of a church, found themselves qualified for the duties of self-government, it was natural for them to feel that they were also competent to the task of secular administration. Thus the town, or primitive political society, was of twin birth with the parish, or religious society. These tendencies, resulting from the religious opinions of the early settlers of Massachusetts, were strengthened by the fact that they were, with hardly an exception, drawn from the middle classes, and met upon the footing of a common social equality.

All these elements, however, might have been counteracted, and the foundations of an aristocracy laid, had it not been for the cheapness and abundance of land

—and land, too, of such moderate fertility that it could only be made valuable by intelligent labor. An aristocracy can never be formed except upon the basis of something like an exclusive right in the land, by which the community becomes divided into two classes, landlords and tenants. No such division ever took place in New England. The early emigrations having been undertaken from religious motives, and not from considerations of gain, there was nothing to tempt those large capitalists who might have stipulated for manors and principalities as the condition of their becoming partners in the enterprise.

Thus the religious opinions of the early settlers, the general level of social equality from which they had started at home, and the abundance of land productive enough to reward labor, but not to invite capital, led to the development of institutions embodying the principle of self-government more fully than had been before known. An additional impulse was given to these tendencies by the early establishment of the system of free schools, in which provision was made for the education of every child, at the public expense. For the first time in the history of the world, the principle was laid down and carried out into operation, that the education of youth was the duty of the state, the expense of which was to be defrayed by a tax upon property, to which those who had no children were as much required to contribute, as those who had. Education was justly regarded as the right of all, and not the privilege of a few. In knowledge was recognized an element of protection in which all were interested, and for which all were bound to pay.

The parish or religious society, the town, and the common school, have been and are the characteristic institutions of New England. By them and through

them, we are what we are, and have what we have. They were not exotics, transplanted from another clime; but they were the spontaneous growth of the soil, and their roots were twined round the fibres of the popular heart. They all wrought together for a common end. They fed the soul from the tree of life, and the mind from the tree of knowledge. They formed the instinct of social order, and practically trained men how to build themselves into a state. A town-meeting does not usually awaken much of reflection or emotion in those who attend or observe it, but it is a most pregnant and suggestive spectacle. It is the primitive political monad, entire within itself, competent to complete its own appointed work, and at the same time furnishing the deep and broad foundation on which the more comprehensive functions of the state repose. The readiness with which men at these meetings form themselves into an organized body, the facility with which they dispatch business, the tact with which they discern the limits of their powers, and the respect which they show to the letter of the warrant which summons them, are supposed by us to be matters of course, belonging to man as man. But they are the precious legacy bequeathed to us by the toils and sufferings of our fathers. They are the transmitted instincts of regulated liberty. By them is the citizen distinguished from the subject. In these faculties and facilities the security of our institutions resides. They keep us in that state of stable equilibrium which renders a revolution impossible. The essential principle of the civil polity of New England is, that there shall be the maximum of administration and the minimum of government. Nothing shall be done by the town which can be done by the school district; nothing by the county which can be done by the town; nothing by the state which can be

done by the county. Power is to be kept as much as possible in the hands of those most exposed to suffer from its abuses. The conservative element is sought, not in the limitation of political rights, but in the multiplication of political trusts.

In the history of our country, the two principles of religious faith and civil liberty, have been in harmonious co-operation, and not in mutual contrariety. Religion and its ministers have not been the enemies of progress; nor has there been that fatal alliance between liberty and irreligion, so often seen upon the Continent of Europe; nor have the frantic steps of revolution been marshaled by torches lighted at the fire-brands of hell. The progress and prosperity of the country are the result of the mutual action and reaction of these two principles. The religious faith which was so powerful as a sustaining and hope-inspiring presence to our fathers, in their days of sorrow and of small things, is not less important as an elevating and restraining element in the maddening whirl of success. As has been truly remarked by Coleridge, "the two antagonist powers, or opposite interests of the state, under which all other state interests are comprised, are those of permanence and of progression." The highest problem of political wisdom is to blend these two powers in harmonious and concurring equilibrium. In the torch-races of antiquity, not only those lost the prize who failed to reach the goal before their competitors, but those also who ran so heedlessly that the light which they carried was extinguished. So it is with nations to whom the fire of liberty is intrusted; they must guard the flame while they run the race. There is an analogy between the perfect man and the perfect state. The perfect man is not a man without passions, for that would be an impossible monster, but a man in whom

reason and conscience are guiding principles, but the passions simply propelling impulses, never supplying their own end and object. So, a perfect state is that in which the reason and conscience of the community, speaking by the voice of law, control the passions working in their appointed sphere of material development. In England, the only country in Europe which affords anything like a parallel to our own, the element of permanence is sought in the landed interest, the House of Lords being, in theory, and to a considerable extent in fact, an assemblage of the great landed estates of the realm. Our institutions give to us the largest measure of the element of progression, because each individual feels himself to be a part of the state, and pours out the rapid currents of his own heart, to swell the tide on which the nation is borne. The spirit of the living creature is in the wheels of time. But where is the power of permanence to come from? It is supplied in some measure by the upper branch of our legislatures, which is supposed to reflect the deliberative wisdom of the country more distinctly than the popular body; but as they both rest upon the basis of universal suffrage, the protection thus afforded is rather formal than substantial. The antagonistic power which we need, cannot be found in political combinations and mechanical contrivances, since all are set in motion by the same popular will, but it must reside in the popular conscience. The people must be their own law as well as their own impulse. A perception of right and wrong, founded upon distinctions running deep into the spiritual nature of man, must be a controlling element in politics. The elective franchise must be held to be a trust as well as a right. A godless democracy, in which the passions of men move to their wild work through the forms of law, happily for mankind, contains within

itself the pledge of self-destruction. Who can stand before a vindictive, rapacious, unprincipled majority? Those principles and motives which shed so pure a light around the narrow cabin of the Mayflower, which gave such worth and dignity to the memorable compact there drawn up and signed, must wait upon our steps, as we move along the giddy and perilous edges of power and wealth. That Rock of Ages, which was a shelter to our fathers in the piercing storm of trial, must spread for us its healing shadow, in the feverish blaze of prosperity. Robinson, in his letter of advice to his people, tells them to honor their rulers, "not beholding in them the ordinariness of their persons, but God's ordinance for your good." Noble, significant, enduring words! The state is God's ordinance for man's good, and there is no higher law than that which bids men dispose themselves into "the unity and married calm of states." If the allegiance of the citizen be made to rest upon any lower basis, the state is degraded to the level of a copartnership or a corporation. What light is to the eye, what sound is to the ear, law is to the unperverted reason. It is the voice of God in the soul of man.

The unexampled growth of our country in population and wealth, and the power which, for good or for evil, is put into our hands, make it all-important that our mental and moral cultivation should keep pace with our material civilization. Many lights of hope and promise are shining upon the path that lies before us, and we may look forward to the future with cheerful trust. But I cannot but think that there has manifested itself, of late years, in various parts of the country, a growing impatience of law, which certainly bodes no good. Law is too often written and spoken of, as if it were the arbitrary decree of some superior and irre-

sponsible power, and not the national reason and conscience, prescribing rules of conduct to the national will. The same feeling shows itself in a morbid sympathy with crime, summoning the generous impulses of humanity on behalf of him who has broken the law, and setting its face against justice, as a tyrant and an oppressor. It inflames and alarms the popular mind, by denunciations of imaginary plots and impossible conspiracies against their liberties; it encourages the wolves and polecats of the press, in their foul assaults upon the peace and good name of men and women; it directs the currents of popular prejudice and popular passion against the judiciary, and would fain paralyze the arm of justice, so that it may neither smite the guilty nor protect the innocent. Restraints imposed by religion; restraints imposed by law, international or municipal; restraints imposed by reason of youth, and restraints imposed by reason of sex, are all felt to be evils. The largest amount of liberty is deemed to be, under all conditions, the greatest good, forgetting that "everything that tends to emancipate us from external restraint, without adding to our own power of self-government, is mischievous," [1] and that if liberty with law be the fire on the hearth, liberty without law is the fire on the floor. Far be it from me to say that this is a general tendency, or that the good sense of the country is not a greatly preponderating element; but I must appeal to the observation of such of my audience as have reached or passed the middle period of life, if the evil be not one which has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished? The heat of party spirit warps the mirror of the mind, so that it returns no true image, and the disturbing force of a near irritation unsettles the habitual movements of the reason; but it is

[1] Goethe.

hard to believe that a reflecting man, in his sober senses, can entertain the notion that any danger is to be apprehended, in our country, from the excess or oppression of law. Our perils lie not that way. It is more likely that the explosive force of the principle of liberty will shatter the vessels which contain it, than that the vessels by their solidity and compression will prevent the due expansion of the principle itself. If there be any descendant of the Pilgrims who gives his hand in aid of popular violence, directed against the law, whether it be to destroy an abolition press, to rescue a fugitive slave from the hands of justice, or to commit an assault upon the person and property of the representative of a foreign power, he dishonors the blood which flows in his veins. He has read their lives and their writings in a spirit as perverse as that in which they read the word of God, when they found in it a warrant for selling the wife and son of Philip into slavery.

The study of history rebukes the pride of human reason, by revealing marked disproportions between particular events and the consequences to which they lead. The first forty years of the seventeenth century were fruitful in striking occurrences and remarkable men. Charles II. was born in 1630. When he had reached an age to understand the rudiments of historical knowledge, we may imagine his royal father to have commissioned some grave and experienced counselor of his court to instruct the future monarch of England in the great events which had taken place in Europe, since the opening of the century. Upon what themes would the tutor of the young prince have been likely to discourse? He would have dwelt upon the struggle between Spain and the Netherlands; and upon the Thirty Years' War in Germany, in which the fortunes of a daughter of the House of Stuart were so involved. He

would have quoted the spirited speech of the English princess, that she would rather eat dry bread as the wife of a king, than live in luxury as the wife of an elector—and would have recalled the sorrow that fell upon the heart of England when the news came of the disastrous battle of Prague. He would have painted the horror and dismay which ran through France at the assassination of Henry the Fourth. He would have traced the glorious career of Gustavus Adolphus, step by step, and lingered long upon the incidents of his last fight—how the king went into battle singing a hymn of Luther's; how the deep-voiced chorus rolled along the files of his army, and with what rage and grief the Swedes fell upon the foe when they saw the riderless horse of their beloved leader rush madly through their ranks. He would have attempted to convey to his young pupil some notion of the military genius of Maurice of Nassau, of the vast political capacity of Cardinal Richelieu, and of the splendor and mystery that wrapped the romantic life of Wallenstein. But so seemingly insignificant an occurrence as the sailing of a few Puritans from Delph Haven, in the summer of 1620, would doubtless have been entirely overlooked; or, if mentioned at all, the young prince might have been told, that in that year a congregation of fanatical Brownists, who had previously left England for Holland, sailed for North Virginia; and that, since that time, many others of the same factious and troublesome sect had followed in their path, and that their project of emigration had so far succeeded, as to enable them to send home many cargoes of fish and peltry. But with our eyes, we can see that the humble event was the seed of far more memorable consequences than all the sieges, battles, and treaties of that momentous period. The effects of those fields of slaughter

hardly lasted longer than the smoke and dust of the contending armies; but the seminal principles which were carried to America in the Mayflower, which grew in the wholesome air of obscurity and neglect, are at this moment vital forces in the movements of the world, the extent and influence of which no political foresight can measure. Ideas which, for the first time in the history of mankind, took shape upon our soil, are the springs of that contest now going on in Europe between the Past and the Future, the end of which no man can see. May God inspire us and our rulers with the wisdom to preserve and transmit, unimpaired, those advantages secured to us by our remote position, and by the fact that we started without the weary burdens and perplexing entanglements of the Past. May no insane spirit of propagandism lead us to take part in alien contests. May we throw into the scale of struggling freedom, not the sword of physical force, but the weight of a noble example—the moral argument of a great people, invigorated but not intoxicated by their liberty—a power which, though unsubstantial, will yet, like the uplifted hands of Moses upon Horeb, avail more than hosts of armed men.

We have met here to-day, drawn together by the sentiment of antiquity; but what a span is the life of New England, compared with the life of the world? There are persons now living, who have conversed with a venerable man, who remembered to have seen Peregrine White, who was born on board the Mayflower. By a fact like this we seem to be brought near to the event which we are commemorating. But if antiquity be measured, not by the lapse of dead years, but by the beatings of the heart of national life, we have a right to feel and to express the sentiment. The relation of time exists only in the mind. Thirty generations of

the hybernating sleep of China, are not longer than two crowded centuries of energetic New England.[1] We take pride in the material prosperity of our country, and we have a right to do so; but on this occasion let that feeling be tempered with a softer and gentler sentiment. Let the remembrance of the past solemnize the joy of the present. Let the thoughts awakened by the sufferings and sacrifices of our fathers, take the shape of gratitude for our blessings and submission in our trials. As you return to your comfortable homes, and greet the smiling faces of your children around your well-spread boards, let your hearts be stirred with a fresh sense of thankfulness, when you think of the piercing winds that chilled the Pilgrims, and of the hunger that wasted their strength. You have read of the sufferings of their first winter—how, under the exposures and privations of their new mode of life, one after another sickened and died, so that when the spring came, one-half of their whole number had been gathered to their last sleep. If separation from those we love be hard to us, living in ease and comfort, walled about with security, with such fullness of life around us, what must it have been to them, that handful of men and women, set upon the edge of a wilderness dark with unnumbered apprehensions, when the removal of each face was a sensible diminution of their common stock of cheerfulness and hope! Would that the last moments of those thus early called could have been soothed with a foreknowledge of the great works that were to follow them! Would that the dim eyes of the dying Carver had been permitted to see the things which we now see! Would not so magnificent an apocalypse have awakened a glow of rapture and exul-

[1] "Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay."
—*Tennyson.*

tation, not fading away even before the glories of the Beatific Vision! And if it be permitted to those who have passed into the skies, to recall the life of earth,—if there be sensitive links of memory vibrating between time and eternity—may we not feel an assurance that our fathers are with us, in spirit, at this hour, and that throbs of mortal joy are mingling with the deep peace of those serene abodes?

Men of New England! Sons of the Pilgrims! Let not the fleet angel of this hour leave us without a blessing. If the memories of this day have softened and melted your hearts, stamp upon them, before they grow cold, some image of ancestral worth. Rich are the benedictions which have fallen upon our heads from these covering heavens. With us, the God of our fathers has no controversy. He does not try our faith by making noble efforts fruitless, and heroic sacrifices unavailing. He has set no perplexing chasms in our path, between the purpose and the work. With us, well-doing is happiness, and duty is another name for prosperity. Great is the debt we owe to the Past; great is the trust committed to us for the Future. We can pay that debt—we can discharge that trust—only by working faithfully in the Present. The stately march of our laws and speech, which began at the rock of Plymouth, will ever move in the paths of honor and of peace, so long as it follows that great guiding light which led the Pilgrims into their land of promise.



ADDRESS

WILLIAM ADAMS, D.D.

1852



WILLIAM ADAMS

(1807-1880.)

Dr. Adams, a native of Colchester, Connecticut, graduate of Yale and of Andover, came, in 1834, to New York to the pastorate of the Broome Street Presbyterian Church. Nineteen years later the Madison Avenue Church was formed for him, and Dr. Adams had become one of the noted members of the then remarkable New York clergy. In his early days in the city he was active in the organization of the Union Theological Seminary. For forty-four years he was one of its directors; for the last seven years of his life, its president and the Professor of Sacred Rhetoric. Dr. Adams was an enthusiastic member of the New School branch of the Presbyterian Church, but his abhorrence of sectarianism and his love of unity made him foremost in the work of reunion with the Old School division. As chairman of the committee on reunion, he bore a great share in bringing about the agreement between the two sections, now so firmly welded that the causes of the separation are well-nigh forgotten. Dr. Adams was of striking personal appearance and magnetic manner, original as a teacher, and graceful, full of force, and scholarly in public address.

ADDRESS

BY what secret sympathy are we drawn together on this day of the calendar? Something more is it than a filial regard for an honored ancestry; more than a fond attachment to the place of our nativity, though the memory of the homes and haunts of our childhood be bright beyond all Arcadian scenery. Chiefly is it the honest conviction that the event, we this day commemorate, was immediately related to the general progress and happiness of the human race. Were provincial pride or patronymic pretension the motive of our celebration, the sooner it were abandoned the better. But if it be true, as we have soberly believed, that the small company who landed from the *Mayflower* in 1620, were an important link in the long drama of human history; if their faith, fortitude and success were destined to tell beyond themselves and their own times, on all generations and all lands, then is there no one man, wherever born, who has a greater or less degree of interest in them than another; and so long as we study the ways of Providence with a philosophic comprehension and a kindly heart, no place can be found for arrogant pretension, but all place for majestic humility, Christian charity and boundless hope.

Mr. Carlyle, with his characteristic mannerism, has said, "the best thing England ever did was Oliver Cromwell." With more soberness of style Mr. Southey

has justly observed, "that there is no portion of history in which it so much behooves an Englishman to be thoroughly versed as in that of Cromwell's age." Oliver Cromwell was New England working on British soil. Puritanism has had two homes and histories, trans-Atlantic and cis-Atlantic. The origin and substance of the thing was one, but the stream was destined early to be divided, a part running down in the regular channels of British history, and a part passing under the sea and reappearing upon our own shores with prodigious advantages in its favor. A noble theme, indeed, is Puritanism in its relations to the politics, the literature and the religion of the British Isles; great things has it accomplished, whereof we are glad, in its native home; reformed abuses, secured rights, promoted freedom; but its cis-Atlantic development has been in a new world, on a virgin soil, far removed from those ancient institutions and associations which elsewhere have modified its form and embarrassed its life. Nor let us suppose that Puritanism is an obsolete tradition. It is active now; its work is still needed; its history is not yet ended. The long struggle between freedom and despotism is not yet decided. We have still need to be fortified in the principles of our fathers. When the gentle spirit of Christian liberty is in danger of encroachment on the one hand from the old form of arrogant authority, and on the other from the stealthier corrosion of false philosophy, it is well for us to recall the forms of our canonized forefathers; to study the lessons which, though dead, they still speak to us; or, as they themselves would have expressed it, when Christ is in danger of being crucified afresh between two thieves, it is time *that many of the Saints who sleep should arise and come out of their graves and appear unto many.*

A good history of Puritanism is yet a desideratum in English literature. That history has been undertaken by writers not a few, from different positions; but, as with a good picture, there is only *one* point from which it can be viewed aright; every other is too high or too low, too near or too remote. We have often wished that Milton had brought down his history of England to his own times. Perhaps his poetic genius would have been a hinderance rather than a help; certainly he was too near the origin of Puritanism to describe those triumphs and rewards of freedom which gladden our eyes. If one would learn the affluence and rotundity of the English language, we should certainly advise him to study the pages of Lord Clarendon; if he would acquire forensic eloquence, or the art of special pleading, we should counsel him to read Mr. Hume. But who would think of discovering in either of these distinguished authors a just conception of the English Puritans? Besides that which is substantial, there is much extrinsic and incidental in their life, which may catch the eye of the most superficial observer; shadows to displease, and charms to attract; much that is repulsive, and much that is heroic; and many a bright gleam of beauty shines in upon their serious life, as the winter's sun casts its warm smile upon the solemn pines and cedars of New England woods. But when we pass beyond all forms and accidents to the very soul of their history, we find it, where the sympathies of many historians cannot reach—in an earnest religion. By an effort of the imagination, I can conceive of Juvenal writing odes on chastity, Congreve composing church psalms, Byron writing Hebrew melodies, and Percy B. Shelley discoursing on theology; the only incongruity which my imagination absolutely refuses to entertain is, that David Hume, the sophist and the skeptic, was in

any respect qualified to write an impartial history of the Puritans.

Besides these deep-seated antipathies of authors, there are other difficulties in the way of an impartial description of these remarkable men. As a party they were not homogeneous. No one man stands forth as their exponent and representative. There were many differences among those who usually pass under one name. Some of the best of the Puritans, considered as to doctrinal belief, never separated themselves from the National Church; yet were they as really of the movement as any who went to Frankfort or Geneva. Some struck for civil liberty only as that was incidentally related to the cause of religion; while others, with little thought or care for religion, were willing to be classed with the Puritans, because of their enthusiasm for political freedom. It has ever been the constant temptation of authors to lose sight of the real question at issue in the battle, in a description of some one of the many heterogeneous and motley hangers-on of the army.

Then again, reformers are, of necessity, men of peculiar qualities. Bold, impetuous, severe, rather than refined, elegant and loveable. Their weapons are not of lath but veritable steel. In days of ease, we pass a false judgment on men who wrote with fire within, and real fire around them. Open any book in our language, and you may know, from the very style of its composition, to what period of history its author belonged. Every page of Addison breathes of luxurious tranquillity, rural and metropolitan. Look at Harrington, Latimer and Milton, and you feel that you are in a fortification in a time of siege, and the words fly hard-shotted, and at a white heat. From this fact it happens that we cannot always describe reformers by the qualities of more pacific times. Some things existed in

excess, and some things were in utter defect. We must subtract and concede, and then form a judgment. Their life was not a simple equation. You cannot describe it by indiscriminate eulogy, nor indiscriminate censure. There was action and reaction, advantage and disadvantage, good and evil; and we are only concerned to know whether, after all allowances and subtractions, the good does not preponderate. Stand by the side of the ocean when the sea is coming in, and you behold weeds and wrecks, the dead fish and the swollen carcasses of animals, things unsightly, heterogeneous and confused, drifting to the shore; and you listen to the wild scream of the sea-birds, with their melancholy cry, but, notwithstanding, we tell you that it is the great tide which is rising, lifting the stranded ship from the bar, bearing argosies of wealth upon its bosom, filling up all the channels and inlets, and bringing with it the healthful breeze which fans a continent with the tonic airs of life.

In that ingenious classification of sciences proposed by Auguste Comte, a prominent place is assigned to what he calls *sociology*, or the science of human society. Whether we accept the speculations of the French thinker or not, we must hold that there is such a reality as the *philosophy of history*. It disturbs our intellectual repose, to be told that events occur, subject to no law, proportioned to no plan, and controlled by no Providence. It was a beautiful conception of classical mythology, that the Muse of history was the daughter of Jove; and the conviction that there is some design which gives unity to human history, is a corollary from the belief that there is a God who governs the world which he has made. By some infelicitous judgment, what is termed *Ecclesiastical History*, is made the special reading of divines. All history is ec-

clesiastical history; for the Christian religion is the soul of the world, the end and solution of its creation. It was not a clergyman, but Frederick Von Schlegel, who said, "without this faith the whole history of the world would be naught else than an insoluble enigma, an inextricable labyrinth, a huge pile of the blocks and fragments of an unfinished edifice, and the great tragedy of humanity would remain devoid of all proper result." [1] We wonder not that many, eminent for their genius, have confessed to a distaste for historical reading, so long as they have never discovered the true point of perspective from which to study the picture which God's hand has thrown upon the wall. What care I to know that Cæsar conquered Judea; that James was a bigot; that the Puritans went into exile; if I do not perceive the relations of these events to that true optimism, the Christian faith, which involves the life and liberty of the world. What a meagre idea of the Christian religion is that which represents it as symbolized in creeds and catechisms, well enough to be learned by children, and used for sharpening the intellect of those who have taste and leisure for discussing its dry abstractions; or as a salutary medicine for the bruised in spirit; a form which hovers chiefly around churches and churchyards, the domain of the clergyman and the undertaker; its light like that which superstition has seen flickering over old graves; a skeleton at the feast while the music and the revelry go on; its great help to man being to throw a bridge over the river of Death, and conduct him safely to another world. Religion is life, it is power. Every memory associated with this day honors it as the parent of Republics, the patron of well-governed States, the soul of justice, enterprise, freedom and commerce; and not

[1] Philosophy of History, Lect. X.

more certain is it that the whole body of the sea is swayed by the attractions of the heavenly orb, than that the whole surface and depths of society are yet to be governed by the potent laws of the Christian faith.

Think not that I have proposed a mere professional service—though it be true, according to Cicero, that the Syrian rhetorician would have been more at home had he spoken before Hannibal of rhetoric rather than war,—if, pressing at once to the heart of my theme, I undertake to show what were the relations of religion to the event which we celebrate, and how it is that religion is the imperishable seed of true liberty. I confess to an inability to comprehend the history of the Puritans, their essential life and their accidental forms, their wisdom and their mistakes, if surveyed from any position other than that we have now chosen.

In the Royal Museum at Stockholm, among other great curiosities, is preserved, with religious care, the small, unpretending, Latin Bible of Martin Luther; its margin covered with notes in the Reformer's own hand, a prize brought by Gustavus Adolphus out of Germany, and worthy to be saved as the Ithuriel weapon which, in the lifetime of its owner, roused fifty millions of people to life and freedom. We say it most deliberately and soberly, and it will be for me to show it, the history of later times is the history of a free Bible. Its working, or its want, explain all the phenomena of modern society. I say the Bible, because, by the invention of the art of printing, that book is made, what, before, the organism of the Church assumed to be, the visible symbol and exponent of Christianity itself.

The Protestant Reformation was not an ecclesiastical schism, but a great moral movement, which sent the pulses of life through every channel of society. In the year 1802, just half a century ago, the National

Institute of France offered a premium for the best dissertation on this question: "What has been the influence of the Protestant Reformation on the political condition of different European States and the progress of letters?" Villers, the successful competitor, with consummate felicity, opens his admirable essay after this manner: "Had an assembly of savants, prior to the sixteenth century, wished to ascertain the influence of any schism from the Roman See, they would undoubtedly have propounded the question in this form: 'What are the evils which have followed this impious and pernicious doctrine?' But now that many European States are separated from the Papal power, an assembly of philosophers in a country still attached to her communion, proposes to fix the influence of the reformation on European society and the progress of letters. This change in the language implies a change in opinions; and the very form of the question conveys its own answer."

The first remarkable conjunction of events, demonstrating the superintendence of Divine Providence in our history is, that Columbus discovered the New World, not until after the birth of that German Reformer, who was destined to give form and direction to the new movement of society. As the Island of Delos floated about unfixed and unknown, till she who was to be the mother of Apollo and Diana, needed it for an asylum, when, by the command of Jove, it rose from the sea, pillared firm on the foundations of the earth, to be the birthplace of Wisdom and Freedom, and the chosen site of that temple to which all nations should bring their offerings, so was this New World enveloped in the mists of the ocean, its rivers running silently to the sea, its vast surface waiting for a future population, its existence altogether unknown, till the

auspicious moment had arrived, when God's hand lifted the veil of the sea, and a new continent was revealed as the home of new men and the theatre for a new act in human history.

It is a well-known literary fact, that Mr. Hume wrote his history of the Stuarts before the narrative of preceding events. As well begin a man's biography at the fiftieth year of his age; or describe a ship of war under full sail, ploughing the waves, with no mention of the little plank, under the water, which turns about her bulk and glory. True and well-chosen are the words, with which Shakspeare begins his historical drama of Henry VIII.:

> "I come no more to make you laugh; things now
> That bear a weighty and a serious brow,
> Sad, high and working, full of state and woe,
> Such noble scenes as draw the eye to flow,
> We now present."

In all history there is not one cycle better defined and more complete than that which sweeps from the reign of the monarch after whom the dramatist has named this interlocutory chronicle, down to the passage of the later reform bills of England; and the soul of the whole period is Religious Liberty. Are we sure that we comprehend the real meaning of these familiar words?

The Reformation in England, unlike its contemporary movement on the Continent, which beginning with religion went on to politics, began with politics and went on to religion. It has been given as a humorous description of man, that he is a creature with a will of his own, who longs to be Pope. King Henry verified the definition in his own case; and impatient because the incumbent of the Papal Chair would not favor his matrimonial fancies, this royal Bluebeard resolved that

he would do as he liked, and set up Pope for himself. His Protestantism amounting to nothing but independence from a foreign authority, his position was wonderfully unique and anomalous; maintaining Papal dogmas, yet defying Papal supremacy; oddly enough dragging Protestants and Papists to execution on the same hurdle; the former for disbelieving transubstantiation, the latter for believing the Pope was supreme. But the beginning of strife is as the letting out of water; first a drop, then a stream, and then a flood. A change in one respect promised changes in all. Mythology informs us of an eagle, purloining meat from the altar of the gods, who saw not the coal of fire cleaving to her prize, which, borne away, consumed her nest. The Protestantism of the King began in self-will and passion; but the Protestantism of his subjects had a celestial origin, and was fanned to a larger and yet larger flame, till it burned up the last relic of intolerance and despotism. While the politics of the King were filling the eye and ear of the world, there was a new power beginning to work, without observation, which was destined to change every aspect of the controversy. The translation of the New Testament, by Tyndale, into the English tongue, synchronizes with Henry's rupture with Leo X. It was read with prodigious eagerness by the people. The translation of the whole Bible soon followed. Disposed to favor an act which sanctioned his pretensions in the controversy with Rome, the King himself authorizes its distribution, and enjoins it upon all preachers to insist upon its use. When this potent book had been working upon the minds and hearts of multitudes for twelve years, the passionate monarch saw his mistake, and endeavored to rectify it. He interdicted what before he had permitted. He put Tyndale to death for having translated the book which now



he feared. A little book is that, but it has kindled a great fire. Let the "Defender of the Faith" pursue his own policy, play his own game; like the electric chain which feels not the power it transmits to others, he has let down the lightning of heaven into the heart of a nation, which will never find rest again until it has secured for itself that just freedom which is the birthright of man. The controversy has now fairly commenced. Here is a reformation, not extrinsic and accidental, but with a soul in it. The parties perfectly understood one another; though there were many side issues and collateral disputes, all which was vital, as we shall presently see, was included in this controversy concerning the freedom of God's word.

It were too much in a discourse like this, to write the history of this great strife. But observe a few facts. In the reign next succeeding, that of Edward VI, facilities for the circulation of the Bible were multiplied; and just in that proportion, changes occurred in the thinking of the nation. Then ensued the reign of Mary, when bigotry sought to quench the heavenly spark in blood. The four winds blow upon the great sea, the storm rages, and the floods arise and foam. Fear not the issue; for that little book, by this time, has sent its roots into many hearts, and they will be the tougher and stronger for the rocking of the tempest. "When Queen Elizabeth was conducted through London, on her accession to the throne, amidst the joyful acclamations of her subjects, a boy, who personated Truth, was let down from one of the triumphal arches, and presented her a copy of the Bible. She received the book with the most gracious deportment, placed it next her bosom, and declared that, amidst all the costly testimonies which the city had that day given her of their attachment, this present was by far the most

precious and acceptable."[1] Hail, ethereal stranger! Thou hast survived the flood, and hast received a royal welcome! Art thou the coal of fire from the altar, destined to repeat and finish thy former service, in consuming the hay, wood, and stubble of the eagle's nest? Little enough did that haughty daughter of the Tudors understand what she did, when, on that day of pageantry, she so honored the Book of God. We shall hear of great things in her reign, which were not in the programme of that public show. Let her cleave to her semi-reforms; addict herself to papal ceremonies; institute her star-chamber and high commissions; refuse all toleration to sectaries; determine that "no man should decline right or left from the drawn line of her authority;" it is all too late to reinstate the ancient thraldom. What she did in form, multitudes had done in earnest; pressed that Bible to their hearts; and no power could destroy the freedom which was nurtured by its potent contact. We will not liken that Divine Book to the Trojan horse, which was drawn into the besieged city by the inhabitants themselves; for that contained within itself a host of martial men, and the rattling of arms was heard as it went over the wall; but we are sure that, pacific, truthful and celestial as is its nature, it will plant the seeds of great revolutions, and time only is necessary to ripen the results which it promises. In the reign of James I. was prepared that translation of the Bible, about which cluster all the memories and loves of those who speak the English language in two hemispheres. Let that "lubberly fellow" proclaim his policy, "no bishop, no king;" boast of his skill in kingcraft; let him make a fool of himself in his theological discussions at Hampton Court; let him resolve to "harry the Puritans out of his kingdom;" in enjoining

[1] Hume.

a standard version of the Bible, he has done one thing, for which we are disposed to pardon all his pedantry, all his buffoonery, all his bigotry, and all his cruelty. We forget the origin of the good, in the intrinsic value of the blessing; just as Samson drank of the miraculous stream, without so much as once remembering that it proceeded from the jawbone of an ass. Follow the history of that book, now that it has obtained its long-sought liberty, and tell me whether it is a vain fancy that its history is the history of modern times. It opens its seals, blows its trumpets, and utters its voices. Soon we hear of it in camps and parliaments. It is made the arbiter of last appeal between kings and people. Cromwell reads out of it to his troops before the battle of Naseby. It leads on the struggles of non-conformity—that Protestantism of Protestantism—that dissidence of dissent. At every stage it demands more and more of right for man; emancipates from one servitude after another; and, at each advance, secures a better and a safer liberty. Literature revives at its presence, as verdure is nourished by flowing fountains. All the literature of the English tongue has been created since our vernacular version of the Scriptures. Pactolus, with its sands of gold, rolls not so rich a flood as that which a free Bible has poured along the affluent channels of our language, producing fertility wherever it spreads. We trace its effects, not merely in the Baxters and Howes, who, for fire of patriotism, force of eloquence, vastness of learning, depth of erudition, never had their superiors; but in the large observation and serious truthfulness of Shakspeare; and when Milton wrote those immortal poems which are the crown-jewels of our language, it was as if religion, emerging from her conflicts, had reached her royal coronation, and put the well-earned diadem upon her head, amid a

"sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies." That same emancipated book, comes over in the *Mayflower;* the first compact of constitutional liberty was written on its cover; it has a home in every cabin which sends up its smoke in the wilderness; it cheers the toil of the lonely exile; it was read in every school and family; it was carried in their knapsacks by the soldiers of the Revolution; and when the American Republic was founded, George Washington laid his honest hand upon this book, to take the oath of office; and by this time, a whole nation was so thoroughly bred in its precepts, that the idea that an official oath could be falsified by any *coup d'état*, never so much as entered the imagination of an American citizen.

Now let us go back and show that this synchronism of events was not accidental, and verify our assertion, that the freedom of the Bible was the source and pledge of all other freedom. Let me prove to you, that the key which we now have in our hands is the only one which can unlock the character of the Puritans, explaining alike their virtues and their errors.

They claimed the right to possess, read, and interpret the Word of God. That right was denied; and here the controversy began. In that principle which they asserted, you have the right of private judgment, which is the very soul of freedom. How shall we define the right of private judgment? I answer, partly in the words of Mr. Macaulay, "We conceive it not to be this, that opposite opinions may both be true; nor this, that truth and falsehood are both equally good; nor yet this, that all speculative error is necessarily innocent; but this, that there is on the face of the earth no visible body to whose decision men are bound to submit their private judgments on points of faith." The written Word of God is the only *authority* in mat-

ters pertaining to religion; to every man belongs the right of consulting, interpreting, and obeying this for himself, uncoerced by penalties, unbribed by partialities. No human power, individual or organized, may in any form or degree restrict this absolute freedom. See you not that the very first claim by the Puritan was a blow struck for human rights and human liberty? He looks into the Book of God, and learns that he is a man. In finding his religion, he finds his humanity. His soul dilates with the conception that the Creator speaks to him as his own child and image, addressing his reason, affections, and choice. With Moses, he ascends the mount of the law; with Elijah, he hears the still small voice of God on Horeb; with the Apostles, he accompanies our Lord to the Mount of Transfiguration; and with John, is he caught up to the third heavens, to behold the vision of the new Jerusalem. The first claim of Puritanism was an assertion of the democratic idea in its purest and sublimest form. Its very rudiment was *religion asserting popular rights.* Shall man take away what God has given? That which began with one claim was sure to advance to others. Withstanding arrogance and despotism in the assertion of the right to the book which God had addressed to our individuality, Puritanism from the beginning was pledged against all forms and acts of tyranny, and political reforms were born of religious liberty. In that remarkable production, the "*New England Primer,*" familiar in past times to all the homes and schools of our country, whose pictorial representations, if they did not inspire a taste for the fine arts, most certainly created an undying hatred of all tyranny, are many things "hard to be understood." We wonder not that many a young memory and understanding broke down at *effectual calling.* But as we reach habits of thought-

fulness and observation, we grow into the meaning of the compendious truth, "They who are effectually called do partake of justification, adoption, and sanctification, and *the several benefits which in this life do either accompany or flow from them.*" What an affluent stream is that which flows from such a fountain! What benefits are those which accompany such a lofty vocation! What manifold rights of the people are involved in the first great law of religion, that the soul shall be free! What a growth of intelligence, enterprise, industry, wealth and happiness, is included in that germ of a personal relation to God! Wonder not that when Sir Edmund Andros came over as the emissary of James II., to take away the charter of the colonies, the inhabitants of Massachusetts, bred in the great principles of religion, in the fearless assertion of civil liberty, quietly locked up that august personage in the castle of Boston before they ever had heard of the displacement of the Stuarts and the accession of the Prince of Orange. This is the way in which God makes free Republics; not by philosophical theories, and French politics. He makes free *men* by a free Bible; the grant of one liberty is the *Magna Charta* of all.

It is customary in many quarters to represent the Puritans as "ridiculous precisians," quarrelling about vestments and forms. One might think, so much is said about caps, surplices and rochets, that there was a sober truth in the humorous conception of Sartor Resartus, that "*Society is founded on clothes.*" But this is a superficial view of the matter. Those ecclesiastical vestments concerning which disputes ran so high, were only the symbols of antagonistic principles. You would not scoff at the American Revolution as a contest about a few chests of tea; or the Wars of Succes-

sion as waged for the color of roses; nor ridicule the strife of great parties as a dispute concerning the hue of the cockades they wore in their hats. The Puritans had read in that free book, which was their law and light, that man is *justified by faith*, and while they were exulting in their spiritual freedom, there crossed their path the form of arrogant authority, which, in God's name, demanded of them something above what was written. And what was it that they were required by royal authority to wear? Those garments and appendages which, by long usage and mystical meaning, were associated in every mind with that ultramontane power whose jurisdiction they had disowned and abhorred. Thus it happened that one of the first points at which great principles met in battle, related to matters so trifling as ecclesiastical vestments and forms of worship. But why dispute at all upon points so trivial? Were they not things in themselves indifferent? No sensible person did dispute concerning them so long as they were regarded as indifferent. Had the dress prescribed to be worn by the clergy been a simple scholastic garb, suited to the decency and gravity of public worship; had this been *recommended*, rather than prescribed under penalty of deposition, no Puritan would have objected to its use. The ground assumed by Bishop Hooper in refusing to be consecrated in the specified vestments, is sufficiently catholic, modest, and manly. But when the matter in dispute was known by all parties to involve the vital questions of the times; when it was perfectly well understood by all, that, wrapped up in the folds of those clerical habits, was the old controversy concerning the supremacy of God and the freedom of man, there was no place for indecision. The Puritan saw that the book of Leviticus belonged to the Old Testament and not to the New; and he

would not put "petticoats" in the place of faith. When Bishop Day spoke to Archbishop Gardiner of justification by faith, that intolerant hierarch exclaimed, "If you open that gap to the people, then farewell all again." Both parties knew perfectly well what they were about; and when the one enjoined and commanded, as God's representatives, human inventions and the badges of human pretension, the others, knowing the result to which the first admission would lead, that the controversy could be settled just as well on an inch as a continent, afraid of that bondage which would begin its thraldom in requirements soft and silken as satin vestments, took their ground and exclaimed aloud, "Out with the bondwoman and her sons, we are children of the free." When the monarch undertook to force them into conformity to Popish habits under penalty of that English inquisition, the Court of High Commission, it stirred their blood, and you cannot censure their course without condemning the Revolution of 1688 and the accession of the Prince of Orange—the latter being only an advanced result of the former. Puritanism a dispute about clothes! A rag may prove the volume, rapidity and power of the swollen current on which it rides. That glorious flag which is our pride and protection, by sea and land, what is it but a piece of woollen bunting, with imitations of certain stars and stripes? Aye! what is it? There is a whole history in it. It is the symbol of a nation's freedom and independence. The memories, pride, patriotism of a whole people are in its folds; and as oft as it is spread over our heads, the heart strikes quicker and stronger, and the step is firmer and manlier. Whoever would ridicule the precision of the Puritan in refusing to wear the prescribed Papal habits, let him know that that refusal was born of the freedom of the New Testament; and we shall meet it again in political history,

when the controversy relates to such littlenesses as ship money and paper stamps.

It is said to be a peculiarity of people born in New-England, by which they may always be known, that they have *a habit of asking questions.* Undoubtedly they have. But that habit was not born of a discourteous and impertinent inquisitiveness, a meddling with other men's matters; it has a nobler pedigree. There underlies this national and sometimes troublesome peculiarity, a great and potent principle, the root of our history and the marrow of our bones. All reforms begin with *asking questions.* A few centuries ago the world was overshadowed with authority. Opinions were prescribed alike in politics, philosophy and religion, by one uniform despotism. The dialectics of Aristotle reigned supreme in the Universities, when Lord Bacon began to experiment and inquire, throwing into the crucible, and asking what things were made of and made for; and forthwith the new Philosophy was born. The Puritan also began to ask questions; how it was that a woman, whom the Apostle had forbidden to speak in public, could be the Chief Bishop of the Church? Who it was that had the right to curtail his freedom in the worship of God? Whence did that right proceed? Just so soon Religion was reformed, put on her beautiful garments, and bounded on her career of light and freedom. James enraged and alarmed his subjects, by affirming that they had no more right to inquire what he might lawfully do, than what the Deity might lawfully do; but the Puritan, believing that the Church of England was originally founded on the right of private judgment alone, immediately asked why he should submit his private judgment to that. The political reformer caught the spirit of investigation, and began to ask, What is the foundation of this old adage: "The King can do no wrong?" Do not crowns and thrones some-

times cost more than they come to, asked the Roundhead; and Republics were born in their place. So be it that the questions propounded are sensible, they are the voices of freedom and the index of manhood. Doubtless the habit may exist in excess, degenerating into frivolity or exaggeration. Many a beautiful work of Art and production of Nature has been spoiled by inquisitive boyhood wishing to see what was inside of it; but we say it soberly, that investigation is the parent of all freedom; free inquiry the stability of all right; and that so soon as it is gone, nothing but insipidity or despotism remains. In the history of forensic eloquence, it would be difficult to find more political wisdom or common sense than were packed into the brief speech of the late Duke of Wellington on the Reform Bill: "My Lords, this measure was demanded by the people; it has passed the House of Commons. I think it wise that it should pass the House of Lords. Otherwise the people may take it into their heads *to ask the question*, 'What use is there in having any House of Lords at all?' "

If our fathers, as the freemen of the Lord, had not pressed the right sort of questions, there had remained to us no freedom whatever.

Again, it has been said that the Puritans rendered themselves and their cause ridiculous by the nakedness of their religion, the sourness of their faces, and the austerity of their manners; that they did violence to the finer instincts of our nature, and are responsible for the licentiousness and infidelity which afterwards ensued. Mistakes, undoubtedly, they made; but we are disposed to say, with Horace:

> "Verum ubi plura nitent in carmine, non ego paucis
> Offendar maculis;" [1]

[1] De Arte Poetica.

which, in a free translation, may be rendered, "When the sun shines, never mind the spots." Mistakes, grave and sorrowful they made, we admit. Had they avoided them, they would have been more than human. You cannot understand those mistakes unless you bear in mind the controversy in which they were engaged. As with their virtues, so with their errors, both are to be accounted for by the issue between Freedom and Tyranny, to which they were pledged. Do you not know that in polemics men always drive one another to extremes; and that, in proportion to the violence of the contact, is the force of the rebound? The pendulum which is thrown to the utmost limit in one direction, is sure to swing as far in the opposite; and it will oscillate for a long time backwards and forwards, before it reposes in the true medium. You laugh at the Puritans because they gave their sons and their daughters such uncouth names, out of the Old and New Testaments; by the strangest solecism, calling their first-born son ICHABOD; their well-beloved daughter TRIBULATION, or GODLY SORROW; interlarding their conversation and speeches with Scriptural phrases, and appending or affixing to the names of their captains and leaders whole verses out of the Bible, as if it were their study to become as disagreeable and ridiculous as possible. But we have seen that the very question at issue between them and their antagonists related to the authority and freedom of the Bible; and, just in proportion as that authority was denied, and that freedom was curtailed, they were resolved that both should be asserted and honored. That which strikes our ear as a laughable mistake, at this distance of time, had no such sound when the old battle was raging. If the one party studied to avoid the Bible, and do it despite, choosing the names of their children out of profane classics, the ro-

mances of the Troubadours, or the Roman Calendar, would it not be the likeliest thing in the world, that the opposite party would show their hand by selecting prænomens out of the Book for which they were contending; and that with an utter disregard of sound and sense? Is there no principle of our nature, to say nothing of religion, by which we readily explain the fact that, when the King issued his Book of Sports, commanding men to frequent bear-gardens on Sundays, on that very account they would go in greater numbers to the conventicle; and that, on their way thither, their faces would be drawn down into an unusual length and awful gravity? If bacchanalian choruses were the choice of the roystering reprobates on the one side, do you wonder that barbarous versions of the Psalms, and these delivered by some with an unnecessary drawl and nasal twang, were in use by the opposition? When the war was active between two immense forces, is it strange that every sign, badge and emblem of the one should be stripped off, and even trampled under foot by the other? Because the *cross*, that beautiful symbol of our faith, was then the ensign of a political party which they esteemed aggressive and despotic; therefore, the Puritans took it down from their church steeples, and substituted a bare weathercock, guiltless of all such associations. Say now, in these easy days of toleration, that they carried their antipathies too far; but go back to the times when the strife was pending to which all our liberties are to be traced, and say whether you cannot do more than justify, even honor the sacrifice which stripped off the decorations of Religion in order to save its life. It was ABRAHAM offering up his own son, JEPHTHA sacrificing his own daughter, when the Puritan showed his purpose to forego some of the sweetest privileges of his

faith, on the principle that what was lawful, in itself, was not expedient or right in those critical exigencies which were to decide the destinies of generations. I speak not of the present times, but there is not a man of us who, had it been his lot to take part in the struggles of our fathers, would not have refused the observance of *Christmas*, that annual festival which was garlanded with all the memories of ancestry, just so soon as it was understood that the name itself was a symbol of the great strife to which all were pledged. For the same reason was it, because one party addressed prayers to a multitude of Saints, some of whom, to say the least, were of a doubtful character, therefore the Puritan refused the prefix of *Saint* even to the Apostle of the Gentiles, and the Disciple who leaned on Jesus' bosom. Because the Romanist prescribed the duty of praying for the dead, the Puritan, to avoid the least imputation of what he regarded an unscriptural error, declined all religious services at the interment of his friends. The first instance in which it is known that a prayer was offered at a funeral in New-England, was so late as 1685, at the interment of Rev. William Adams, of Dedham, Massachusetts, an act which attracted much observation and comment at the time.[1] Puritanism, the nakedness of religion! It was the nakedness of the athlete, entering the arena, stripping himself of every robe which would embarrass his limbs, before wrestling for very life. The struggle past, wonder not that the victor, as he carried away the Book for which he had fought, held up high and foremost his glorious prize; that, in the outburst of his enthusiasm and exultation, he poured scorn on all things profane and human, in opposition to the object of his reverence and faith. Wonder not that when he took it with him

[1] Sewall's Diary.

into the cabin of the *Mayflower*—a free dove into the ark—he solaced his lonely voyage with its sublime revelations; that three sermons a day throughout the passage charmed the weariness of the exiles, and that their jubilant psalms mingled day and night with the roar of the winds, and the everlasting anthem of the ocean. Think it not strange that men, emerging from such a history, should require some time to relax their religious austerity, and discover, in new circumstances, the happy medium. Smile not at the great truth which is hidden in the playful remark of that veracious historian, Mr. Diedrich Knickerbocker, that "the colonists unanimously resolved that they would take the legislation of Moses as the laws of the province, till such time as they had leisure to make better." What else, in all consistency, could they do, than honor the Book against which government, authority and letters had so long been in arms? Thus of necessity, from the very enthusiasm of their success, they pendulated into the extreme of severity. The forced conformity of the English commonwealth, and the legislative gravity of the New-England colonists, were mistakes, as we say; but they were mistakes which no human wisdom could have escaped. There are some things in our nature which never can be coerced. Seriousness is one, and laughter is another. The Puritans rebelled when King James commanded them to play according to law. We wish now that they could have remembered the same law of humanity when they sought to make men serious according to statute. For myself, I have never wondered at the phenomena of New-England witchcraft. Unless human nature has materially changed since the days of our boyhood, I incline to think that, were the same enactments in force now which existed two centuries ago in Massachusetts, relative to the forced gravity

of the young, queer things would occasionally make their appearance down the chimneys; incomprehensible pins would be stuck into the flesh of aged gravity, and unaccountable missiles would be projected by invisible hands.

Nor is this all which can be said of Puritanical austerity. There is a liberty which leads to lawlessness. The heroes of Plutarch, with their passionate love of freedom, had no conception of the laws by which that freedom should be moderated and restrained. No servitude is so debasing as liberty without law. All history had chronicled the same story—those who would be free, baffled by their own success, and buried beneath their own triumphs—independence leading to wealth, wealth to luxury, luxury to impatience of control, and this, by rapid stages, to effeminacy, corruption, vassalage, and destruction. A new thing was that which the Puritan had undertaken. Liberty, which tends to excess, he sought to moderate and control. Hence he subjected himself to severe discipline. Breaking away from the authority of the King, in a peculiar sense, he put himself under the authority of God. He struck for freedom, and conquered himself. He demanded his rights, and passed his "self-denying ordinances." The more he was coerced into rebellion against political and ecclesiastical usurpation, the more weights and laws, denials and mortifications, he laid on himself. That liberty which he espoused was not the goddess of which Pagans had sung, with a loose dress, a flushed cheek, bacchanalian voice and dancing step; rather was it, in the imagery of the book he had studied so wisely and loved so well, a "chaste virgin," whose very smile was sobered with gravity, whose beauty was that of serious thought, and whose every grace of garment, word and manner, declared not only the spirit of life,

but the *law* of religion at the heart. The Puritan was not the first man who had fought heroically and successfully for freedom; but he was the chief of those, who having obtained it, however intolerant he may have been, was not intoxicated and ruined by it. He did more than break the bands of the Philistines; he avoided the effeminacy of pleasure, and rigidly adhered to that self-control and abstemiousness in which was the secret of his strength. Hence gravity with him was a study, and austerity a law. His dread of the playhouse, the bear-garden, the dance and the revel, was his mode of expressing a great truth—that man, if he would preserve and enjoy liberty, must keep himself from those things, which tend to the destruction of liberty. Say he was mistaken as to modes and degrees; who shall question the truth of his judgment? Our liberties may be secured in charters and constitutions; but who or what shall guarantee us against the excesses of liberty but self-control in the individual man? The motive power, the mainspring, the regulator, balance and detent, must be combined in the same mechanism. Give to the comet its centrifugal force alone, and it will burn and destroy, strewing its lawless flight with blazing ruin; but join therewith the centripetal power, and it will be sure to turn at the right point, and shoot along its boundless path, itself a world of fire, yet passing between other worlds without collision or harm, awakening only admiration at the harmony and beauty of the mighty laws it obeys. Show us where and when there has been a political revolution in these modern times, favorable to liberty, which has been successful without this combination of life and law, impulse and restraint, which is secured by the Christian faith. No man understands the politics or literature of Continental Europe, who remembers not that infi-

delity once arose in mighty wrath against despotism, enlisting herself in the cause of justice and humanity, asserting man's rights with an eloquent tongue and defending his weakness with a strong arm; but when the old tyranny was dethroned, the successful combatant put the torch to the temples of religion and liberty, burned up its own house, and like the demoniac in the New Testament, went raging about among the tombs, cutting its own flesh, and refusing alike the restraints of chains and clothes. English Puritanism uprose against the same despotism; but when its victories were won, it reared its churches and school-houses; casting away the chain, it held itself in firm faith to truth and duty; with the Bible in its hand and prayer in its heart, it went to work to build up free institutions on the foundations of religion. Therein lies the difference between the history of Puritan republicanism and all the mournful disappointments of the world.

One thing more remains to be said to complete our analysis. That book which was the Puritan's law, had taught him a great truth of history—the justice of the Almighty; in the faith of the ultimate vindication of which he was armed for duty and endurance. There are many forms of heroism; the highest often the least honored. The soldier sits composedly on his charger in the face of danger, or rushes into "the imminent deadly breach," but it is with the flag of his country floating proudly over him, with the inspiration of martial music thrilling his every nerve; with the proud consciousness that a nation's eyes are fixed on his bearing, and should he fall, a nation's hand would hang wreaths of honor upon his urn. Our fathers espoused a good cause, and believing that a just God would, one day, vindicate it and them, they displayed the higher heroism of patient fortitude under suffering unob-

served and unapplauded. Nor are we to suppose that to them was given any adequate conception of the magnificent results of their decision. God makes men great by withholding from them the knowledge of their greatness; hiding, as by a veil, pierced here and there for mere glimpses of the future, the splendid rewards of their actions, while strengthening them in a steadfast trust in present duty. Could they, whose serious features we recall to-night with filial reverence, have foreseen all the results which we now behold; the laws, the governments, the civilization which have followed their wisdom and valor; could they have known what changes in the world would occur in consequence of their great sacrifices, the enthusiasm of that vision would have relieved their life of all its bitterness. But this was the heroism of their faith. Like their Lord and Master they made themselves of "no reputation." They went out of their own gates, turning their backs on the universities in which they had courted letters; on the pulpits in which they had preached righteousness; on the homes in which their affections had nestled; expatriated themselves in a strange land; braved the terrors of the Western Ocean, the cold of an unknown sky, the solitude of an unexplored wilderness, cut the last link which bound them to the civilized world, and were alone with the stars and with God. They staggered in the faintness of famine; with their own hands they dug the graves of wife and child; when half were buried, they knew not but that all would die before the return of the bird-singing, and the whole might die and not be missed by the world they had left; notwithstanding all which, such was their faith in the justice of God, that they who survived were sure, though the stars over their heads should fall, and the pillars of heaven should tremble, the truth and the right

would triumph at the last; and having withstood in the evil day, they planted their feet firm as the rock on which they stood, and in the sublimest of all heroism, resolved, having done all things else, to *stand*. How has that justice been vindicated! Look at the Puritans when depressed and despised under the Tudors and Stuarts—the persecuted band in the perils of their exodus and pilgrimage in the wilderness, and you might be ready to scoff at the folly of faith, and doubt the justice of Heaven. But time is long, and God is calm. The drama is not yet to be ended. That which once was a reproach is in honor now, as if the Almighty were emptying his affluence to vindicate his equity. It has its schools and its universities, its freedom and its laws, its spindles and its ploughs, its steam-presses, steamships, and speech-lightning; its commerce and its navies; a world-continent, with room enough and to spare; its declarations and constitutions; its millions of men, with free thought and free speech, and where is the power of the world to-day? Not in Venice, nor Florence, nor Lisbon, nor Madrid, but with those who speak the English language, freighted as it is with all the thoughts and voices of freedom.

Behold the auspices under which we are called to frame here a new form of human society.

First of all are the memories of ancestry, and the traditions of a long and eventful history. From the tone of contempt which has been affected by some, it might be inferred that we were a people without a rightful ancestry, unacknowledged before the world, "disgraceful foundlings, blushing at the bend of illegitimacy in our coat armorial." Can any thing be more absurd? Can any inhabitant of the British isle boast of a prouder pedigree than we? The pride of those who still hold the ancestral cliffs, records our

consanguinity in every blazon of their honors. The old unconquered British, the Saxon, Rollo's Scandinavian blood, are ours.[1] Our bones are full of the memories of British history. The blood which flows in our veins is the same which once warmed the brave hearts now sleeping in the moss-grown graves of England's martyrs. If there be any virtue in historic lineage, the literature and life of England are ours; nor can any man between Land's-End and the Orkneys, possess a greater claim to the fame of one jurist, poet, philosopher, or defender of liberty in British history, than we ourselves. Does the act of transplanting a tree dispossess it of any of the layers of fibre which form its substance?

While this identity of history and language exists, one thing is to be named wherein we stand alone. The circumstances under which England was separated from the Roman dynasty in the reign of Henry VIII, have entailed a connection between Church and State which has embarrassed her secular policy, and will embarrass it for a long time to come. By slow degrees we have reached, what as yet no other nation has attained, the entire separation of Church and State, with no diminution, but an increase of the power of true religion. Not to speak of politicians who have had their own ends in view, men like Hooker, Stillingfleet, Burnet, Warburton, Paley, Gladstone, and Chalmers, have defended the alliance of ecclesiastical and secular politics, on different grounds; but chiefly because of an assumed obligation of the Government to provide for the highest interest of the people. It was for our land to solve the problem at which piety and wisdom had toiled elsewhere in vain, how the power of religion could be increased over a people, at the same time that

[1] James H. Hillhouse.

it borrowed no aid nor support from the Civil Government. The facts of the last census will be a cheering voice to those who are elsewhere striving for the same freedom. England tolerates all religions; but *toleration* is an odious word. While one form of religion is permitted, another is established by law and statute. The blaze of those bonfires, and the ringing of those bells which announced the national joy on the repeal of the test and corporation acts, have scarcely yet died away. But this was but a partial advance towards that liberty which we had attained long before, and the presage of yet other advancements which we have left far behind us. Some of the best men in England at this moment are debarred from their just rights at the universities and elsewhere, because conscience compels them to dissent from the established religion. We have no dissenters in America. We boast not of toleration, but of universal freedom and equality. The truth on this subject was not reached all at once. When that noble man, John Robinson—fit in every quality of learning, prudence and piety, to be the leader of the brave band whose deeds we celebrate—bade them, in the memorable address which he made to them on the eve of their embarkation, to *remember that more light was yet to break out of God's word, that the Reformation was not yet complete, that Luther and Calvin had stopped short of the whole*, it was not of any occult philosophy hidden beneath the surface of the new Testament of which he spake; undoubtedly it was of this very thing, the relations of religion to the civil power, that he intended to be understood. Some glimpses of the truth on this subject had he, and before God and his elect angels he charged them to keep their minds open to receive the whole when it should come. By little and little did it come, till the last dis-

ability was removed, and legislation utterly ceased from all attempts at installing one form of religion at the expense of another; and here is a vast continent, where religion now asks no other support than the intelligent minds and warm hearts of her own disciples. This perfect liberty and equality for all forms of religious opinion sometimes brings with it, of course, sentiments which are noxious. But there can be no true freedom for what is good, except there be freedom likewise for what is bad; and where is the bad so likely to be neutralized and counteracted, as where running waters meet together and purify themselves by a gentle effervescence of contrary qualities, instead of stagnating in a feculent pool, where no breeze or current disturbs the slime which mantles its surface. The best mode of refuting error is to let it out into the air. Powder is harmless if thrown loosely on the surface; when rammed hard into a barrel it becomes powerful and perilous. The danger is not so much from what is allowed to come out freely from men's mouths, as from what is forced down into their silent hearts; and when any government has succeeded in putting pulpits and presses under the most complete censorship, then look out for explosions. The more still it is the nearer is the tempest. In the very last report he ever made to his monarch, Archbishop Laud declared that never was there a church or kingdom in such complete and quiet conformity; and this on the very eve of the storm which drove king and primate before it as the whirlwind drives the chaff. If any man has a conceit in his brain, let him preach it and print it. If the snake has a fang, thanks to Providence it has a rattle; the noise of its free motion renders it harmless. Great confidence have we in the common sense of mankind; greater still in all truth, which never yet has suffered in free and full dis-

cussion. Weapons which seem at first to pierce her through and through, leave her spiritual form unharmed. We fear at first, we are shocked when things false and irreverent are said of what is true and holy. For their own sakes, and for the mischief they do to the unwary, we greatly deplore that there should be so many vipers brought out by the kindling fires of freedom; but on this account we cannot consent to put out the fires, and freeze to death on the barbaric island of despotism.[1] When the warm sun of the summer is up it brings all unclean and creeping things to life; the grass is full of all manner of vermin, so is the bark of the trees, and the adder crawls out to bask in the glowing heat; but whole harvests of grain are overtopping and concealing the mischief, the trees are growing taller and taller, spreading out their fruitful boughs wider and wider; and with every abatement and disadvantage which can be conceived of by those who are the most fearful and intolerant, we point the friends of freedom throughout the world to our own history to prove that, where liberty is greatest its evils are fewest; where religion is altogether unsupported by law, it is supported most and best. Men of progress and men of enterprise are here its decided friends, and such a vast growth of hopes gladdens our hearts under its smiles, that we scarcely think, of the small mischiefs which attend its imperial munificence.

When the earth was depopulated by a flood, Mythology informs us that Deucalion was directed to replenish it by casting over his head the bones of his mother, or, in less poetic phrase, the stones of the ground. So much as this may be derived from the

[1] The Author has allowed himself to repeat here a few sentences from an article written by him for the Christian Review, Jan. 1852.

fable—that the greatest renovations of society are accomplished by going back to simple and original principles. That which was our origin must be our preservation; that which was our cradle must be our bulwark. Our trust for the future, both for ourselves and for the world, under God, is in the two old-fashioned, unpretending, unvarnished things, which our fathers laid as the foundation of the Republic, a SPELLING-BOOK and the BIBLE. With God's blessing, these potent agents will accomplish results surpassing poetic fancy; but all the wisdom and power and progress of the world, will never make a safe, happy and self-governed freeman WITHOUT *them*. Let intelligence and religion go hand in hand, and every peril will vanish from our path. Letters are not like the dragon's teeth of Cadmus, which, sown on the earth, spring up a frightful host of armed men; they are the manna with which Heaven has whitened the whole surface of the ground around our camp, as food for the people. We cannot reason with a man who questions the utility of a free Bible. The absurd pretensions of Oriental barbarism excite smiles, rather than arguments. A little bigotry amuses us; a good deal disgusts us; but when it is excessive and monstrous, it is positively ludicrous. We look at it as upon the portentous feats of a harlequin, wondering what in the world he will do next. Fast as the forest drops before the march of civilization, let the school-house and the church go up, as they rose in all the infant settlements of New England. In the one, let every child be taught to spell the great words, *God, man, liberty* and *law;* and in the other, let a whole people be trained in that religion which, lighting up the hopes of immortality, is the blessing, the protection, the ornament of time. The world is coming to us, and so it is that we are acting not for ourselves only, but

for the world. As all the tribes of the earth are hastening into our confederacy; the German bringing a language laden with multifarious learning; the French a tongue with much of pure science and every thing besides; as dialects yet more strange begin to mingle with our speech; as the feet of our children are already on the Pacific; as China at last has been tapped by an emigration foreshadowing we know not what, and the Jericho-walls of her barbaric exclusiveness are falling down before the universal Peripatetics who circumambulate them, we rejoice in this, that all will here acquire a language which just now is the only one in all the world in which a man may speak out an honest mind, blunt and bravely, on all subjects, the language of common sense, of liberty and of religion. Here they come in contact with that open Book, the symbol of a free Christianity, which inculcates intelligence, industry, independence, self-reliance, republican virtues, as they may be called; a book, whose first lesson, by awakening the sense of individuality, is, that under God, a man may do more for himself than all the governments and churches of the world can do for him; and which, when independence tends to excess and disintegration, losing reverence and love, interposes a social law, which forbids self-absorption, and discloses the highest good of one in the highest prosperity of all.

Next to an extreme individuality, by which multitudes of good men are tempted to leave politics to care for themselves, or to those who are least to be trusted, our greatest peril springs from an immense prosperity stimulating a thirst for gain, and intruding at length its golden bribes into the sanctities of public legislation. As he who ran with Atalanta in the race provided himself with golden balls, by which to turn her out of her straight and lawful course; so our only danger of de-

feat in the nimble-footed race we have begun, is in being diverted by sideway prizes, out of the straight path of downright honesty and virtue. Against foreign assailants we might arm ourselves; but what shall save us from corruption at the heart, save the self-preserving salt of religion?

While the statute books of a single nation form an immense library, the surpassing wonder is, that all the legislation of God for the world should be contained in one small book; for man is a microcosm, and law for one is law for the universe. Before the Christian era, there was no international law but that of ambition and strength. It was on the mind of Grotius, as a jurist, that the truth first dawned, that the great principles which the Christian religion has prescribed for the conduct of individuals have an equal application to nations; and ever since we have been gradually nearing the conviction, yet to become universal, that the whole code of international law is packed away in that brief formula of justice and love, which Christianity has made the law of the nursery—"Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye also the same to them;" the poet's dream realized in a sublime fact—a fairy tent, folded up like a lady's fan, yet spreading out into dimensions sufficient to hold all the armies of the world.

When Hercules joined battle with Achelous, the latter assumed the form of a fierce and furious bull, and then of a hissing serpent; but the former retained his simple human form; and with naked hand encountered the monster. The struggle is not yet ended between good and evil. Let every American preserve unchanged the form of a simple, honest, earnest manhood; with the love of liberty and of God in his heart; the law of truth in his speech; the light of intelligence

in his eye, and the bounty of goodness in his hand, and so courageously battle against all the violence, and poison, and wrong of the world. God prosper the right! And when the victories of truth and freedom are universal, then and not till then will be the time to write the eulogy of our Pilgrim Fathers.

We enter upon this anniversary beneath wreaths of cypress and not of laurel.[1] Meet is it that the voice of festivity should be hushed; for he who had so often been with us on these occasions, whose sonorous voice had so eloquently celebrated this day of our forefathers in words which will ever adorn our national literature, New England's greatest son, has gone from private friendships and a nation's honors, to rest in that Pilgrim dust which he so much loved and honored. While others have eulogized his learning and eloquence as a jurist, his greatness as a statesman, it is only appropriate to this occasion for me to say that he was the genuine growth of our own soil, and the peculiar product of our own institutions. No flags floated over baronial halls in honor of his birth; no fretted ceiling and storied arch of universities looked down upon his education. Springing from the bosom of the people, working his way upward by his own spontaneous and irrepressible force, he could not have been what he was but for the peculiar influences of his New England home. The small, low, brown house of a plain New Hampshire farmer, with its well-sweep and trees; the patriotic father who told him of the battles of the Revolution; the pious mother who taught him the catechism and the Sabbath hymns; the ploughed field and the mown meadow; the trials and struggles of the hon-

[1] Because of the recent decease of Hon. Daniel Webster the Society had voted to dispense with their annual dinner.

est poor; the winter district-school; the snow storm; the aspirations after knowledge; the difficulties in meeting the expenses of an education; the sympathy of loving brothers; the affectionateness of humble kindred; the New England College; the meeting-house; the Sabbath; Thanksgiving Day; in a word, all the scenery and institutions of his native land, these were the influences which lay about the roots of his character, and made him what he was, in every thought, memory, instinct and sympathy, thoroughly American.

And he has gone! We have laid him down in the spot which he had himself chosen, by the side of our forefathers, and within sight of the Rock which their feet first touched. Should the time ever come when the memories of our origin and our history should fade into dimness; should the national sentiment grow feeble at the heart; should there be found one among us so dead to all patriotism as to care not for the noble lessons which his wisdom gave us, him will we lead to that simple and unpretending tomb, hard by the shore which first welcomed the Pilgrims, hoping that the name and memory of DANIEL WEBSTER will rouse his dormant spirit, even as the bones of Elisha imparted a new life to the dead man who was let down into his sepulchre.

THE CENTRAL PRINCIPLE

MARK HOPKINS, D.D.

1853

MARK HOPKINS

(1802-1887.)

THE celebration at the Church of the Puritans in 1853 was addressed by that master among teachers, Dr. Mark Hopkins, for thirty-six years president of Williams College, and for thirty years the strong and wise head of the American Board of Foreign Missions. Eminent as a student, thinker, and speaker, he was greatest in his personal influence on those about him. When he took its leadership, Williams was still a small institution. Under his wise and self-denying presidency, it became one of the powerful colleges of the country. Dr. Hopkins was a native of Stockbridge. He graduated from Williams in 1824, and shortly returned to it as a tutor. An offer of the chair of philosophy and rhetoric changed his arrangements for entering medical practice in New York, and made Williamstown his permanent home. Six years later, at thirty-four, he was elected president. Many of his courses of lectures were published, receiving wide attention, and it is interesting to note that Dr. Hopkins was a forerunner of those who now emphasize the value of study of the natural sciences.

ORATION

THE celebrations and amusements of a people indicate their character. A *populace*, such as despotism and superstition produce and imply, require to be amused by pageants, and processions, and sports, and masquerades. Giving up the care of their government to the king, and of their salvation to the priest, what have they to do but to convert their holy-days into holidays, and when a prescribed formality has satisfied the conscience, to follow a monkey, or a tumbler, to visit the cock-pit or the gaming-table, to be gay, and, shall I say, happy,—no, not happy—but to be amused and managed like grown-up children. To such, the idea of a Sabbath as a day of holy rest, is inconceivable.

A *people*, on the other hand, reflective, self-governed, feeling their individual and immediate responsibility to God, will create an atmosphere stifling to all pageantry and mummery. They will keep their Sabbaths; their festivities will be irradiated by a rational joy, and their celebrations and holidays will not be without something to strengthen principle, and nourish the affections. These days will be consecrated to the progress of the peaceful arts; they will commemorate the bounties of Providence, the struggles and triumphs of freedom, the piety and heroism of Pilgrim Fathers.

Pilgrim Fathers! What wealth of hallowed associations is garnered in these words! By what others in

the English language should we prefer to designate our ancestors?

They were Pilgrims—and such Pilgrims. They sought no shrine already hallowed. Not by superstition, or fanaticism, or the love of adventure, or desire for gain, singly or combined, were they moved; but, like Abraham, they went out in the grandeur of simple faith, not knowing whither they went. They went, as they themselves say, "with the great hope and inward seal they had of laying some good foundation for the propagating and advancing the kingdom of Christ in these remote parts of the world." [1]

That the object assigned by them was their great object, God has been careful to make evident, not from testimony alone, but precisely as he did in the case of the Apostles and first Christians. So close indeed is the parallel, in circumstances, in character, and in results, that the same language will apply to both.

It was only through long inward struggles, and searchings of the Scriptures, and much prayer, that both were brought to separate themselves from a Church in which they were born, but which had substituted the traditions of man for the word of God, and the forms of religion instead of its spirit. And in making this separation, the temper and sincerity of both were tried to the utmost. Both were forbidden to preach or to teach under heavy penalties, were imprisoned, deprived of their property, put to death, driven from their country and scattered abroad by persecution. Both were placed socially under ban, and utterly scorned by all that passed for refinement in their day—were regarded as "the filth of the earth, and the off-scouring of all things." Against both, Providence itself and the very elements sometimes seemed to conspire, as when

[1] Young's Chronicles.

Paul was imprisoned for years, and was shipwrecked, and was a night and a day in the deep; and when the Pilgrims attempted to leave England, and the enemy came upon them and divided their families, and the storm arose.

But in these trials they were alike patient and confident in God. Paul could say, "I *know* whom I have believed." John Penry could say just before his martyrdom, "I testify unto you for mine own part, as I shall answer it before Jesus Christ, and his elect angels, that I never saw any truth more clear and more undoubted than this witness wherein we stand." Paul could say, "I am ready to be offered." Penry could say, "And I thank my God, I am not only ready to be bound and banished, but even to die for this cause, by his strength." Paul could say, "I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better"—but added—"Nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you." Penry could say, "I greatly long, in regard of myself, to be dissolved and to live in the blessed kingdom of heaven with Jesus Christ and his angels." And he too could add, "I would indeed, if it be his good pleasure, live yet with you to help you bear that grievous and hard yoke which ye are like to sustain, either here or in a strange land." And if the Apostle had had a wife and children, he could hardly have committed them with stronger faith to exile and the promises. "And here," says Penry, "I humbly beseech you, not in any outward regard, as I shall answer it before my God, that you would take my poor and desolate widow, and mess of fatherless and friendless orphans, with you into exile whithersoever you may go, and you shall find, I doubt not, that the blessed promises of my God made to me and mine will accompany you. . . . Only I be-

seech you, let them not continue after you in this land, where they must be forced to go again into Egypt."

Such was their spirit. Persons of all conditions and of all ages were thus sustained through years of destitution and suffering. Some dying in prison, as Neale says, "like rotten sheep," and some enduring the perils and hardships of the wilderness; but all cheerful and confident in God.

Nor were these persons, as a body, more than the early Christians, narrow, or bigoted, or sour, or fanatical, or turbulent, or seekers of novelties. Says Robinson: "As they that affect alienation from others make their differences as great, and the adverse opinion or practice as odious as they can, thereby to further their desired victory over them, and to harden themselves and their side against them, so, on the contrary, they who desire peace and accord, both interpret things in the best part they reasonably can, and seek how and where they may find any lawful door of entry into accord and agreement with others: of which latter number I profess myself, by the grace of God, both a companion and a guide, especially in regard of my Christian countrymen . . . accounting it a cross that I am compelled, in any particular, to dissent from them, but a benefit and matter of rejoicing when I can in any thing, with good conscience, unite with them in matter, if not in manner, or, where it may be, in both."[1] "We uphold," says he, "whatsoever manifest good we know in the Church of England, whether doctrine, ordinance, or personal grace, to our utmost. We do acknowledge in it many excellent truths of doctrine which we also teach without commixture of error; many Christian ordinances which we also practice—being purged from the pollution of Anti-Christ—and for the godly per-

[1] Works, vol. iii., p. 354.

sons in it, could we possibly separate them from the profane, we would gladly embrace them with both arms." [1] How noble this in a persecuted and exiled man! So far were they from seeking novelties, that he says: "But we, for our parts, as we do believe, by the word of God, that the things that we teach are not new, but old truths renewed, so are we no less fully persuaded that the church constitution in which we are set is cast in the apostolic and primitive mould, and not one day nor hour younger, in the nature and form of it, than the first Church of the New Testament." [2]

Our fathers had no "mad rage" against what Hume calls "inoffensive observances, surplices, corner-caps and tippets." [3] They contended for a great principle, precisely as Paul did. As a matter of expediency, Paul took Timothy and circumcised him. He cared nothing about circumcision one way or the other, but when it was attempted to impose circumcision as binding, and the great principle of religious liberty was at stake, he "gave subjection to them, no, not for an hour." He was then as precise as any Puritan ever was, and would have gone to prison and to death for a thing indifferent in itself, just as the Puritans did. When a great principle is in question, it matters little what brings the conflict on. It may be a sixpenny tax, or a pound of tea, or a tippet, or a surplice. No body cares any thing about the tea or the tippet; but we thank God that there have been men who would set a continent on fire, and spend millions of money, and lay down their lives, rather than pay that sixpenny tax when its payment would have conceded the right to exact it; and we thank God that there have been men who, rather than

[1] Works, vol. ii., p. 14.
[2] Works, vol. iii., p. 43.
[3] See the Puritans and their Principles, by Dr. Hall, Int. Lect.

wear a tippet or surplice, when to have done so would have compromised the great principle of religious liberty, would go to prison and to death.

But those who urge that the Puritans were over-scrupulous, may not perceive that that is a two-edged sword; for if the points were thus indifferent, what shall we say of the intense bigotry and narrowness of those who, for want of conformity in things indifferent, could turn two thousand ministers from their pulpits, and imprison men, and put them to death? No, both parties understood well what they were contending for, and if the Puritans had submitted to the imposition of tippets and surplices, this continent would have had another history.

And this leads me to say, that the seal of God in the success and moral glory that have crowned their enterprise has not been less unequivocal in the case of our fathers than in that of the early Christians. In each case there was but "a handful of corn in the earth, and God made the fruit thereof to shake as Lebanon." The sun does not look down upon better results of a pure Christianity in families, in churches, in schools and colleges, in missions, and in civil freedom, than can be traced directly and wholly to their sufferings and labors. If we consider their feeble beginnings, and the obstacles they had to encounter, the world has seen nothing like it.

Nor is it in this country alone that the fruits of their principles are seen. The civil liberty of England was from them alone. Not to mention the explicit passage so often quoted from Hume, Lord King says: "As for toleration, or any true notion of religious liberty, or any general freedom of conscience, we owe them not in the least degree to what is called the Church of England. On the contrary, we owe all these to the Independents

in the time of the commonwealth, and to Locke, their most illustrious and enlightened disciple." "I fearlessly confess it," says Lord Brougham, as if it required even yet no little courage to speak the truth of the Puritans, "with whatever ridicule some may visit their excesses, or with whatever blame others, they, with the zeal of martyrs, and the purity of early Christians, the skill and courage of the most renowned warriors, obtained for England the free constitution she enjoys." [1]

If, then, we except miracles, what seal which God set upon the labors and sufferings of the early Christians has he withheld from those of our fathers? We claim for them no perfection, but we see in them serious, earnest, prayerful, intelligent, self-denying Christians, witnesses for God, and on the whole, the best representatives and truest successors of the Apostles and early Christians then on the earth. We even venture to question whether John Penry, a minister regularly ordained, with so many points of resemblance to the Apostle Paul, and like him laying down his life for the cause of Christ, was not quite as much in the true line of apostolical succession as the Archbishop who signed his death-warrant.

Our fathers, then, in coming to this country, were pilgrims of the highest order; not simply wanderers, but wanderers as Abraham was, because they too "sought a city that hath foundations." As such we venerate them. We rejoice at the incorporation into their designation of a term which also designates the sublimest feature of human existence, and which should teach us and each of their descendants to say, "I am a pilgrim, and I am a stranger on the earth."

And the Pilgrims were also Fathers. Far beyond

[1] The Puritans and their Principles, Int. Lect.

any other founders of states does this title belong to them. Their purpose was to lay foundations. They brought their families with them. They had tenderness, and forethought, and self-denying labor, and prayerful anxiety. No characteristic was wanting that could entitle them to that tender and venerable name.

They were Pilgrims, and they were Fathers; travellers towards a better country, that is, an heavenly; and the fathers and founders of a mighty empire on the earth.

As Pilgrim Fathers, their immediate gift to the world was New-England. From them and their institutions, in connection with their maritime position, and the climate and soil and scenery of the country, has originated the general type of character which belongs to her people. These institutions, this general type of character, we accept as ours, and rejoice in them. In the light of history, which shows the tendency of the sterner and the more hardy virtues to deteriorate where the soil is fertile and the climate genial, we are thankful that our fathers were directed to a land that necessitated industry and frugality, and stimulated enterprise and invention; fitted, much of it, as has been said, to produce nothing but ice and granite.

This land we love. We love her scenery, her green mountains, her transparent streams, her long summer days, her gorgeous autumns, her clear, sharp, frosty mornings, her winter evenings, her tasteful and thriving villages, her district school-houses, her frequent spires, and her quiet Sabbaths. We glory in her people; in their system of free schools, in their general intelligence and shrewd practical sense, in their inventions, their economy that saves to give, their true-hearted kindness, their enlarged and far-seeing benevolence, their care for the insane and the deaf and dumb

and blind, in their religious missions that circle the globe, in their love of a rational liberty, and in their general reverence for the law under its simplest forms.

Nor are we over sensitive to the provincialisms and uncouthnesses of here and there a "live" and unmitigated Yankee, though he may flatten the *ou*, and whittle, and ask questions, and boast absurdly. Others smack of the soil they grew in as strongly as he. If he do whittle, he will commonly whittle his way; his questions are apt to be to the point; and if he boasts that he is going to "cut all creation out," who more likely to do it?

If, then, the Fathers had simply given the world New-England, it might have been well for her sons to associate themselves, as do others, to cherish local associations and family traits, and to keep alive that home-feeling, which is an ornament and a pleasure to the individual, while it narrows neither his vision nor his heart to the perception or love of all that is peculiar and good in other forms of society.

But if this had been all, this day had not been celebrated as it has been, with persistency and enthusiasm, from Plymouth Rock to the shores of the Pacific. We do not honor the Pilgrims simply as the Fathers of New-England, but because they were the depositories and best representatives then on the earth of the one central principle on which the hopes of the race rest, the progress of which measures the world's progress, and gives unity to its history.

Here a wide field at once opens before us, but the time will permit us only to inquire—

1st. Whether there be such a principle of unity.

2d. What it is; and

3d. Whether its ascendency would secure to society all that is desirable.

Is there, then, indeed, the unity just spoken of in the history of this world? Is there any one central principle from their relation to which the early dispersion of families, the settlement of continents, the rise and fall of kingdoms, the waxing and waning of civilizations, and the transfer of the seats of empire have derived their chief significancy? Have they been parts of a great whole, subservient to some one end?

That they have we can not doubt, though we may be unable to see the connection with it of remote, and decayed, and lost races. The early limbs of the pine perish, and leave no trace on the smooth shaft when centuries have gone by, and it lifts itself a hundred feet into the air; but doubtless they contribute to make it what it is. Such a unity we can trace in all the fixed combinations, and circular and improgressive movements of the works of God. These have evident reference to an end beyond themselves, as the loom with its recurring movement to the pattern it finishes and passes on. The earth stands now, and the seasons revolve, and day and night succeed each other as they did six thousand years ago. The force of gravitation, the light of the sun, the capacity of the earth and air, of fire and water, to minister to vegetable and animal life, are the same now as then. These fixed combinations and recurring movements are subservient to vegetable and animal life. Moreover, in every individual plant, and in every animal, are parts that minister to the well-being of the whole, and then that whole thus ministered unto, offers itself to minister to somewhat higher, till we reach man, who takes up into himself every faculty and law in all below him, thus crowning the whole, and showing that it is in subserviency to his well-being that it all finds its unity. How beautiful and grand this permanent order and subserviency, this circling of day

and night, and of the seasons, and this ministration from age to age of the heavens and the earth, to the successive generations of men!

And is there a unity so vast and perfect in this fixed and improgressive order of things, that is but secondary, and shall there be none in the flow of time, in the succession of the generations, in the onward sweep and termination of the great current of providential movements? Shall there be no thought or purpose, or informing idea of God, giving its unity to this vast onward movement, and which is ultimately to protrude itself as the blossom from the stem, and then be recognized as the end toward which every secret process and the slow changes of the ages had been tending? We believe there is such a central idea—it is the teaching both of Scripture and of reason—and if so, then in *that*, and in that alone, will be found the key to all history; and from their relation to that, the significancy and grandeur of events, however splendid or humble in their outward aspect, will be estimated.

We next inquire then, what that principle is? It can not be the religious freedom so often spoken of in connection with the Pilgrims; for that may be where there is no religion, but in its stead indifference and infidelity. Such a freedom could avail little. That which is to bless the world is not mere freedom of any kind, but true religion putting itself forth in freedom, and vindicating, in the name of God, all the rights and means necessary to its full expansion. The central purpose and principle in the onward movement of this world we suppose then to be, *the vital union of man with God in moral conformity to him, and so in preparation for an eternal life.* So only do we find an extension of the unity and subserviency we see in all things, by linking earth and time to heaven and an eter-

nal progression. This is the principle—for this the world stands; but for this, religious freedom will be needed, and the demand for that will bring men into such relations to human governments that that will be the thing immediately contended for—the point around which the conflict will be waged. It has been no love for freedom in the abstract, but of freedom for the sake of religion that has walked in the fiery furnace, and gone into the lion's den, and said to rulers, "We ought to obey God rather than men," and so has drawn on and sustained a resistance to oppression that has been the basis of all the civil freedom now in the world. All other freedoms have died out, and will die. This alone has the sap of an immortal life.

The object of religion must be the free expansion and perfecting of that in man by which he is capable of religion. If, then, the religious nature be central in man, it must be that for which all things are preparing a final expansion and appropriate sphere.

That this is so appears because the religious nature is that which is central in the unity of the individual man. Each man has in himself a unity no less than nature and the whole onward scheme of things, and the one is analogous to the other. In the powers that upbuild and sustain the body, as those of nutrition and circulation, man has a circular and improgressive system, that goes on from the beginning to the end of the life of the individual—as the movements causing day and night, and the seasons go on in nature till the end of the life of the race; and this improgressive system in each man is to the unfolding and progressive life of his mind what the movements of nature are to the unfolding and progressive life of the race. This system is for the sake of the intellect with its perceptions and deductions; and this again for the emotions, as of beauty

and sublimity when we regard *things*, and of complacency and love when we regard *persons*. But of the emotions, the highest are those which are involved in the love of man, and in worship—in the love and worship of the Infinite One; and thus that love of God and of man, in which the Bible declares true religion to consist, is precisely that the capacity for which philosophy will show lies deepest in our nature, and gives it its unity. It is the central blossom, as in the palm tree, without the expansion of which no individual reaches his full development. But what is thus true of the individual, must be true of the race.

It may be observed, too, that as the natural order of the growth of the individual is, first the physical powers, then the intellect, and then the religious nature; so in the history of the world there has been, first, the ascendency of physical prowess, then of intellect; and that now, when the whole world is known, and commerce and science are bringing all parts of it together, religion is casting the eye of faith over it all and preparing for its conquest. That the religious element is central, appears also from the necessity of a true religion to any permanent progress or elevation of the race. How can man be elevated except as there is that above him of which he may lay hold, and with which he may commune? We must be gradually transformed into the likeness of that with which we commune voluntarily and with pleasure, and whoever reaches a point where he supposes there *is* nothing, or communes *with* nothing higher and better than himself, has reached a point where all elevation must cease. Hence a man can do nothing so fatal to the best hopes of the race as to lower the character of God, or to weaken the impression it is adapted to make on the minds of men. No heathen nation can make permanent progress.

The same thing appears from the absurdities which men have received, and the impositions to which they have submitted in connection with religion. You may connect a heavy burden with the child on the back of the Indian mother, and she will bear it if you can make her believe, either that it is only the weight of the child, or that they are so inseparably connected that if she would get loose from the one she must abandon the other. How else but by connecting them with that which is deepest and dearest, could men have been made to submit to the absurdities and impositions of Brahminism and of Popery?

Again, as has been said, it is only through this that this world can become a part in the unity of one great moral system, the existence of which is indicated by analogy, and confirmed by Scripture, and to which the vast physical universe revealed by the telescope must be wholly subordinate.

Once more, if we search history for the cause of the most earnest and pervading movements in the past, we shall come to the same conclusion. From religion indeed has proceeded the only movement that has been continuous from the beginning. What but the religious element could have kept the Jews a distinct people for 4000 years? What else could have caused the Christian movement? Think as we may of the religion, the amount of thought and labor, and of expenditure, both of money and of life, that have sprung from it, the revolutions it has wrought, not only in religion, but in philosophies, in art, in government, in social life and the forms of civilization, and that too in spite of the fiercest opposition, show the power of an element like one of the great forces of nature, that "spreads undivided, operates unspent." What but this could have produced the Mohammedan movement, so volcanic, re-

sistless and persistent? To this day it is not spent, but still stands so sturdily and glares so fiercely on all who would attack it, that Christian missionaries turn aside to more hopeful fields. In the present war between Turkey and Russia, we all know what will infuse into the conflict its fiercest, most destructive and unmanageable elements. Through what slumbering element but this could all Europe have been precipitated in the crusades, like a fiery flood upon Asia? What else could have produced the intense movement of the Reformation, and drawn the sharp lines of division that have sprung from it? These are the great movements of the race—the continents in the sea of history, embosoming the lesser movements which spring from divisions into races, and the love of conquest, and personal and family ambition.

Nor has the influence of the religious principle been less where it has not been ostensibly the dominant element. By all lawgivers and despots, whose immediate object has been power, religion has been so incorporated into the state as to be subservient to the purposes of ambition, and has really been the cement of all enduring despotisms. It has been *the* art of king-craft and of priestcraft to identify the interests of the clergy with those of the ruling powers, and so to train the religious sentiment as to make the support of despotism obedience to God. Hence, James of England, though he had in Scotland professed himself a Presbyterian, said he hated the Independents worse than he did the Catholics. Hence the affinity of every reäctionary and monarchical government in France for the Jesuits, and the fact that Protestantism has been uniformly persecuted there. It is felt that the religious liberty which it implies and cherishes, especially in searching the Scriptures, the thought which it requires, the direct respon-

sibility to God which it teaches, and the power of a free conscience which it educates, are antagonistic to the spirit of despotism. And so they are. Religious freedom would fit men for civil freedom, and eventuate in that.

And here I may remark, that it is this want of congruity between Protestantism in its true spirit and the forms of government in Europe that, more than all other causes, has prevented its more rapid and wider spread there, and that has enabled the Pope to recover regions once lost. The rulers have not heartily seconded its efforts; they have feared it, and do now. They watched its first risings; they counter-work and stamp it out as they would fire. It is the presence of this in Turkey that Nicholas fears, and its suppression has more to do with the politics of Europe than appears on the surface.

It would appear, then, that even where place and power have been primarily sought, the controlling element has still been the religious one. This philosophers and statesmen have sometimes scorned as a weakness and superstition, but they have never been able to disregard it with impunity, and often they have been astonished and baffled by its flaming up where they least expected it.

Now it was the growth of this in freedom, that was the great idea or principle that was in our fathers, and wrought in them, and has come down through them to us. We are not of those who disclaim antiquity and discard transmission and succession, and fail to connect ourselves with a vital and organized past. If we believe less than some in the regular succession of the Popes, and in the transmission for eighteen hundred years, often through murderous hands, of spiritual virtues and powers, we do believe in the perpetual presence



of the Spirit of God as of the Shekinah, in his Church, and in a succession for six thousand years, in one unbroken line from the first martyr, through Moses and Daniel and the Apostles, of those who have inherited the promises and died in faith; and in the transmission through them, so that they have always lived and glowed somewhere, of the great ideas of God's supremacy, and of man's right to worship him according to the dictates of his conscience. In this line our fathers stood, these ideas flaming up in them like a beacon-light; they stood, worthy successors of those of old in the same line, who "wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth." In this line we would stand.

The religious element being thus the central one in the history of this world, our next inquiry is, whether its free and legitimate expansion would secure all that belongs to the well-being of society. Is it through this that the Divine idea must find its realization and counterpart?

That this is so we believe, in the first place, because we believe in the word of God, and that says it is so.

Again, we believe it because God has so constituted this world, and, doubtless, the universe, that he who aims at and secures the highest good in any department or sphere, will also incidentally, and so best, secure the greatest amount of subordinate good. This is the general law, and whatever exceptions to it there may seem to be are accidental and temporary. In this principle lies the secret of the unconscious power wielded by our fathers.

Upon the general illustration of a proposition so broad as this we can not now enter. It must suffice to notice its application in organic systems where there is mutual relation and interaction of parts. In these that

which is highest is indeed formed by the lower, but when formed it reäcts upon that lower and becomes necessary to its perfection. Thus the brain, the highest and most central part of the body, is that to which all the other parts are subordinate; but this reäcts, and ministers a pervading and vital influence to every inferior part, essential both to their functions and growth, and the perfection of the brain will both imply and secure that of every inferior part.

So in the tree. For the purposes of its own growth and well-being it forms the leaves highest and last; but it is only as these expand freely in the air and sunlight that the roots will strike themselves deepest, and the trunk be enlarged, and the vitality prolonged. The tree grows from its top. And here is the model of political and social growth. Society is built up like an individual. Like a tree, it grows from its top. Let the nutritive and circulatory movements of society flow freely on and up to the quickening and expansion of an intellectual life, and that will so reäct—as we see it doing in our day, by the application of science to art—as to give to the material interests themselves a range and power entirely unknown before. And then let the top still expand into the higher air and purer light of beauty, and of moral and religious truth, and in every fibre at the root will be felt the upward movement; and there will descend nutritive power and regulative principles, causing a growth that will defy the touch of time, that time will only strengthen and enlarge. The elaborated wisdom of sages will descend and diffuse itself into all the currents of thought, and reach the springs and motives of action, and will eliminate evils by those gradual organic revolutions which come on like the tide, but which no human power can set back.

The difficulty with past civilizations has been that

they did not form an adequate top. The products of the physical and intellectual life circulated in and for themselves, and hence plethora, stagnation, debility, spasms, and dissolution. This is the stereotyped round in which families and nations perish through prosperity. But if these products might flow on and up, if the affections might distribute them rather than appetite, benevolence rather than ostentation, and principle rather than fashion and caprice; if they might minister to a pure and spiritual religion, and be controlled and distributed by that, it is not for the imagination to depict the beauty and blessedness that would pervade society.

Particularly do we believe that there would spring from this a higher culture of all that pertains to beauty; and only from this a permanent civil liberty.

There has been an impression that the virtues of our fathers were stern and repulsive of beauty. And so is the mountain-top stern, where the storms wrestle, and the snow abides, and the ice congeals; but from that mountain-top comes the beauty that looks up at its base, and that skirts the stream on its long way to the ocean. So will the sterner virtues always melt into beauty when the storms and cold with which they have to contend have passed away. Beauty is of God, and it can not be that he who has woven the web of light in its colors, and so wrought its golden threads into the tissue of nature, who paints the flower, and unfurls the banner of sunset, should not delight in all beauty, and that it should not proceed from all godlikeness. We believe, indeed, that only as there are with God himself, the high and stern mountains of a holiness and justice unapproachable, does there proceed from him the smile that makes the violet glad. Neither Christ nor his apostles concerned themselves with art; they did not

even speak of it. The struggle with moral evil was too earnest. Let this be overcome, and the alliance between the arts and the baser passions dissolved, and there would spring up in connection with the industry and science and wealth that religion would produce, a diffused beauty in nature and in art of which we have now no conception.

That there can be permanent civil liberty only through the religious nature is evident, because it is only through this that the true idea of a state, and of its relation to the individual will ever be seen. Through the awakening in each man, and the growth of those powers by which he is connected with God and with immortality, and is bound above all things to conform his spiritual nature to its law, the individual becomes an end in himself, and thus finds a ground for demanding that nothing shall exist, whether in Church or in state, that may stand between him and the freest, and highest expansion of these powers; nothing which shall make use of him for its own sake, and so degrade him from a person into a thing. This is the principle contended for by our fathers. On this ground man has a right to claim that outward institutions, civil and religious, shall be for the individual; shall be means and conditions of growth to his higher powers, as the air, and light, and food are of the growth of the body; and if they are not so, or are obstructive of that end, then, on the same ground, he has a right to remove and destroy them. The Church and the state can become a part of the beautiful unity in the Divine plan, and have a right to be, only as they fit the individual who comes under their agency for a higher sphere; and they are perfect, and from God, just in proportion as they furnish the best possible conditions of individual growth in all that belongs to a true manhood. In the



light of these powers man is seen to have worth and dignity, rights to have sacredness, and the life of the lowliest is invested with a solemn grandeur. Here, indeed, is the basis of rights, and so of that freedom which springs from rights and respects rights, which has God for its author, the good of all through that of each for its end, and for which, in the light of reason and conscience, a man may lay down his life.

Now what we ask, and all that we ask is, institutions, both civil and religious, pervaded by this freedom, flexible to the demands of individual growth; and the right of the people to judge what modifications that may require. Especially do we demand, in the name of humanity and of God, religious freedom. Upon that all other freedom rests. On this subject especially do we demand the right of free action and of free speech, not only in the church but in the street, and the day is not yet when that can be taken from us.

We believe that government and rulers are for the people, the church and the clergy for the laity, and that God has given to men the right, as in their civil, so in their religious capacity, honestly using all the light he has given them, whether of reason or of revelation, so to organize themselves, both in Church and state, as will best secure civil rights and spiritual growth; and organizations so originated and so resulting we believe to be of God. They are not rebellion, they are not schism; they are component parts of God's one great and free kingdom which he will love, and own, and bless, and they ought to be recognized as such. His sun has not shone less brightly, nor his rain and dew descended less bountifully upon these United States since they organized themselves thus, than when governed by one who was "king by the grace of God;" nor have the sunshine of his love, and the rain and

dews of his grace been less abundant upon our churches than upon those governed and blessed by popes and prelates.

Opposed to the free and flexible systems which this principle would form are those—and they include all others—which have an end in themselves, to which the individual is squared, and hewed, and bent, and made subservient. Under these there will be, not true freedom, but a mixture of license and restraint. Those who manage them are willing that the productive faculties of man should be sharpened to any extent; they favor caste, or something equivalent, for that purpose. They give full scope to the sensitive and sensuous nature; they patronize and subsidize the fine arts; they provide processions, and games, and books of sports for the people, and *they have standing armies to keep them in order*. If the sugar-plum will not do, they have the whip. But, recognizing instinctively the main doctrine of this discourse, they uniformly either dwarf or pervert the religious nature. They intervene in every possible way between man and his Maker, assuming ghostly powers, and constructing conduits and channels by which the grace of God may be conveyed to the profane people who may not have immediate access to him. This is their great resource. This done, they may mock at revolution and bide their time, knowing that when the Louis Philippe, or the Louis Napoleon, or Santa Anna, that is sure to come shall appear, the bewildered and helpless people will relapse into monarchy. They think little of the crimes and vices which spring from the depraved appetites and passions; and if the clergy will pray according to the rubric and conform to the canons, they may be indolent, inefficient, dishonest, licentious, profane, without rebuke. But if a clergyman cannot wear a stole, or a surplice, or a white gown, or a

black one; if a few Christians meet, in a private house even, for the study of the Scriptures and for prayer; if the Madiai read the Bible; if Miss Cunningham distribute a Bible and Pilgrim's Progress, then come confiscations, imprisonments, banishment, death. It is for those who do these things that the dungeon, and the slow fire, and the rack are prepared. It is these whom malice pursues after death, and casts out and buries with the burial of a dog. Those who use missals and say prayers, they like; those who read the Bible and pray, they persecute.

There is no book that they so fear as they do the Bible; none that they are so afraid to have the *children* read. They keep it out of their schools, and of their seats of power, as they would the plague. They burn it. They can evade any thing, and stand before any thing but the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Such systems, whether called Christian or heathen, are essentially the same. They wish to use man as a thing, and so intervene between him and God. Under them civilization may advance far, and aggregate power accumulate, and endure long, but *man will deteriorate*, and destruction from without or within is certain. Still, when one system is destroyed, another will arise. Forms may be changed, but the spirit will be the same; revolution may succeed revolution, till they shall have as little significance as street brawls, and there be as many days of July as there are days *in* July, but there will be balanced, and permanent freedom only as there is religion in liberty.

As might be anticipated from what has been said, the special support of all such systems, aside from physical force, has been in an appeal to the religious nature. An exclusive divine right has been claimed.

That of prelates the Pilgrims rejected; that of kings they conceded. Now, that of kings is exploded, at least here. We put it on the same footing as the Divine right of constables. That of prelates, being more closely connected with that religious nature from which is all our hope, but into which every superstition strikes its roots, is still conceded by many, and is at this moment the one antagonistic element among us to the spirit and principles of our fathers. The Pope and certain bishops claim a divine right, received by transmission in an unbroken line from the Apostles, to govern the Church; and in connection with this they claim the power either to change bread into flesh and wine into blood, or to communicate some virtue to the sacraments which they would not have if administered by persons appointed for that purpose in some other way. Is this claim valid? If so, then Popery and Puseyism are right, and all Protestants, Church of England and all, are schismatics and heretics. If so, there are blessings in Christianity which we cannot have by going directly to God. These men hold them in their hands, and the whole race is at their mercy. If so, Christ is not the only priest under the new dispensation, and the benefit of the sacraments will not be wholly from him through faith, but partly, at least, from a mysterious virtue in the elements which these persons only can give. This claim we reject utterly. We say that Christ has made all his people "Kings and priests unto God," and nothing shall take from us the right to go directly to God through the one great High Priest. All systems based on this claim are and must be exclusive and intolerant, and have always been connected with an ignorant and oppressed people.

Our principles, on the other hand, forbid exclusiveness, and whatever of this we may have, is due, not to

them, but to personal infirmity. They call upon us to exercise a large charity. Give us those essential conditions through which the spiritual nature may be best developed; give us the right of private judgment; give us the Bible;—and here I wish the time would permit me to repeat to you fully the recent words of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of England, pressed from him in his conflict with Popery, in which he stands, not for "the Bible interpreted by the prayer-book,"—that would not do for him,—but for the Bible alone, and says, "Whatever is not absolutely declared therein, and yet claims to be implicitly received, I look upon with suspicion," thus sanctioning the very principle contended for by Robinson, and all that he contended for.—Give us, I say, the Bible, and that alone as our standard; and the doctrine of justification by faith so far as to exclude all priestly intervention between us and God, and we can feel that we stand shoulder to shoulder with the multitude of our brethren of every name—with the Hollanders who had the same spirit with the Puritans—with the Huguenots, those nobles in God's kingdom than whom none were ever nobler—with the Presbyterians, whose fathers struggled in Scotland, as ours did in England—with the great company of Methodists and Baptists, and also with our Episcopal brethren, so far as they will permit us. "We would gladly embrace them with both arms." We do not object to Episcopacy as a form of government preferred by the people, but to its being imposed upon us as exclusively of divine right, and to that spirit of the clergy generally, and of the laity increasingly, which says, "Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou." "I belong to a church, and you do not." "I have a right to preach and to administer the sacraments, and you have not." "There are blessings in

Christianity which you can have only by coming to us," —"an all-grasping" spirit "which gives no quarter, allows no truce, but demands an unconditional submission." If history did not instruct us in the uniform tendency of this exclusive principle, we might be surprised to hear the excellent and venerable bishops in their late address, while they claim a middle place between the Romanists and us, complain of the treatment they receive from them, and then turn at once and treat us in the same manner, not allowing that we are Churches at all, or bodies of Christians even, but only "forms of error." "On the one hand," say they, "we behold an all-grasping Romanism which gives no quarter, allows no truce, but demands an unconditional submission. On the other hand are *various forms of error* still pervaded, more or less by the true spirit of Christianity, but constantly breaking into fragments, and steadily tending to latitudinarianism and infidelity." [1] In exclusiveness and unconscious misrepresentation can any thing go beyond this? Here it is—no quarter, no truce, but unconditional submission—and that, too, to those who hold precisely the same relation to the Romanists that we hold to them—unconditional submission, or we must be given over to "uncovenanted mercies," and infidelity and perdition. Now all this we greatly regret. Most gladly would we stand shoulder to shoulder with them and try to do the work of our common Master. We will try to do it still; we too have a ministry and ordinances that we think are of divine institution; we have an open Bible and a merciful God and Saviour. If he shall show us that we are wrong, that he does not intend to work in accordance with the general principle and scheme of freedom of which I have spoken, that the labors and sufferings

[1] Triennial Convention, New-York.

and great promise of the past were all vain and delusive, we will abandon our cherished associations for the dear sake of him whom our fathers at least sought to follow. We will then give in our unconditional submission.

But to us the prospect is not altogether dark. We are encouraged by the remembrance of the blessing of God in the past, and we hope he will continue to bless us. We do not believe, as they seem to think, that his past signal blessings have been an unaccountable mistake which he will rectify in future; but rather, if we shall not prove recreant, that they are but earnests of greater blessings to come. If we see among us tendencies to be struggled against, requiring wisdom and prayer, surely we are not alone in this. We had supposed that we were gaining strength, and not only we, but the great body of kindred churches. We suppose so still, and that the prospect for the diffusion and ultimate triumph, substantially, of the great principles of religious and civil freedom held by the Puritans, was never more encouraging. Those principles that were cabined in the Mayflower—the same once inclosed by the walls of an upper chamber in Jerusalem—and that, two hundred and thirty-three years ago, this day, were first breathed into the atmosphere of this continent from Plymouth Rock, have seemed to abide in it there as a mighty spell, and have so diffused and mingled themselves with it every where, that the whole people breathe them in as with the very breath of their life; and so that no chemistry of tyranny, civil or ecclesiastical, can ever get them out. They were never as strong as they are to-day. They make little show of unity by great convocations. They affect no pomp, and provide no prizes for a worldly ambition. They are in the world under the same aspect and conditions as

Christ himself was—as spiritual Christianity, and truth, and civil liberty have always been. Wealth does not gravitate toward them; fashion has no affinity for them. The votaries of these more often detach themselves and float to other centres. In their simplicity they stand, like the heavens, unpropped by visible pillars. They seem, if not born, yet as it were born again for this continent and this age, and for that oceanic breadth and depth of movement which is clearly before society and the Church. They ally themselves with all that is peculiar in our free institutions, with all that is most simple and grand in the works of God, with all that is free and mighty in the movements of the elements, with all that is comprehensive in charity, and great in effort and self-sacrifice. Like the electric fluid, they are subtle and pervasive, often working silently, and seen only in their effects as they quicken the growth of the plants of righteousness, and crystallize the gems that are to be set in the diadem of the Redeemer. But when the storm shall come, if come it must, that final storm that is to shake "not the earth only, but also heaven," that those things which cannot be shaken may remain, then they will be abroad in their might; now imperceptibly controlling affinities, and now flashing out in their brightness, and speaking in thunder-tones in the moral and political heavens. To the ears of the oppressed in every land those tones will be as music. To the grave where freedom may still be buried, they will be as the trump of God. She will hear them and come forth clothed in the garments of her immortality, and the nations shall walk and dwell with her.

These principles we receive. We wish no antagonism with any body, or any thing, except that which would be necessitated by faithfulness to them. We

wish to know where, and through what it is that God is working, and to work with him. This we would do in peace, and without being persecuted, or reviled, or cast out, if we may: but at all hazards we would work with him. This it is, and not mere freedom, civil or religious, that is to save us; and we receive these principles because we believe that God is working through them, and that by them, as by the sling and stone, deliverance is to come. We receive them because we believe that the might of Omnipotence is in them; and that the promise of the Immutable One is theirs.



THE HERITAGE OF THE PILGRIMS

WILLIAM MAXWELL EVARTS

1854

WILLIAM MAXWELL EVARTS

(1818-1901.)

THE oration of 1854 was given at the Church of the Messiah by William M. Evarts, then eminent in his profession, though it was yet some years before the Lemmon slave case gave him wide reputation. He was active in the Fremont campaign, and a notable member of the Seward delegation at the Chicago Convention. He was defeated in the contest for the senatorship in 1861, but his ability was now clearly established. Under President Lincoln he was intrusted with a private mission to Europe, and later he was one of the counsel of the United States before the Geneva Tribunal. He defended President Johnson, and was the leading advocate for Mr. Hayes before the Electoral Commission. His last public service was that of six years in the Senate—1883-1889. Of him Lord Selborne, the counsel for England at Geneva, wrote: "He was . . . keen but high-minded—in conversation sincere and candid—I could have trusted him implicitly in anything in which I had to deal with him alone . . . he was a good lawyer, a skilful advocate, and had also the qualities of a statesman. . . . Altogether he was a man of whom any country might be proud."

The date of the following address drawing near, and having no time in town for preparation, Mr. Evarts went for a little quiet to the home of his late partner, J. Prescott Hall, at Newport, where the speech was written. On the guest's departure, one of the maids inquired:

"What did you have that crazy man here for?"

"She had heard me," explained Mr. Evarts, who related the incident with relish, "repeating sentences aloud to see if they jumped right."

ORATION

"Quorum gloriæ neque profuit quisquam laudando,
nec vituperando quisquam nocuit."

Mr. President and Gentlemen of the New England Society:

THE custom by which we celebrate this anniversary would find its sufficient support in the sentiment of ancestral veneration. "The glory of the children is their fathers." Of every worthy stock the not degenerate sons cherish the names of those from whom by an authentic lineage they trace their honorable descent. With zealous affection and a pious reverence they explore all sources of knowledge respecting their lives, their characters, their motives, their acts. In a spirit neither arrogant nor envious, they are yet jealous for a just estimate of the virtue and the power which marked the founders of their line; careful that no malign or reckless influence shall distort the record, or obscure the remembrance, of their deeds; earnest in the determination that their latest descendants shall lose nothing of their heritage in these great names, in the course of its descent. Nor should it be for a moment supposed that the spirit of our institutions and the structure of our society, which have discarded the hereditary transmission of rank and power, discouraged even the succession of wealth, and made ridiculous the

culture of a vulgar family pride, have at all weakened or diverted the force of those natural ties which connect us alike with our ancestry and our posterity, and sustain and protect, as a perpetual and imperishable possession, the glory and worth of our forefathers. Say rather that, as you strip from this heritable relation, all that is false or factitious, all that is casual or valueless, you give new force to this genuine lineage of noble character, this true heirship to greatness of purpose and of action. Upon the recurrence of this day, then, although the great transaction which has made it illustrious, had drawn after it no such magnificent train of consequences as history now attributes to it, although the noble undertaking had attained to no proportionate grandeur of result, it would become us to meet with sincere filial devotion, and add one stone to the monument inscribed in honor of the Puritan Exiles, one note to the anthem of their fame.

But the actual course of history has not left the "Landing of the Pilgrims" an isolated or fruitless occurrence, buried in the grave of the past, nor confined its interest to the private and peculiar considerations which should affect the inheritors of their blood and names. It is as the principal and initial in a still continuing series of great events, as the operative and unexhausted cause of large results already transpired, and larger yet surely to ensue, that we chiefly applaud the transaction of this day. Upon the Rock of Plymouth was pressed the first footstep of that energetic and creative power in human affairs which has since overrun the continent, and is stopped in its sublime progress, if it be stopped at all, only with the shores of the all-containing sea. Through the actual aspect of the scene of the debarkation, made up of wintry sea and gloomy sky, and bleak and desolate coast, we see breaking the effulgence of those moral elements of light and hope

which have ever since shone with so conspicuous splendor, and the spot seems to us the brightest and the warmest on the face of the earth; *bright*, as the source and fountain of those radiant glories of freedom in whose glad light we live; *warm*, with the fervent glow of that beneficent activity which pervades and invigorates the life of this whole nation, which has secured the progress of the past and forms the hope of the future.

"Ille terrarum mihi, præter omnes,
Angulus ridet."

It is New England, as she was first founded, as she has since been established and built up, as she now is,—mother of men, source of great ideas, nurse of great principles, battle-ground of great conflicts,—that we celebrate in this commemoration.

There is one circumstance in our situation, as assembled here, which cannot escape our attention. We are without the borders of New England, yet no exiles from our country; we are beyond the protection of those governments that still rule over the soil of the Puritan plantations, yet we have neither lost our birthright there, nor are we strangers here; however generous and cordial has been our reception in the community in which we live, yet we have come hither, and here remain, neither by sufferance nor by any title of courtesy or hospitality; we are here *of right* and *at home*. As it is with us in this central metropolis, so is it with our brethren, the descendants of our common ancestors, in the fair cities of the South, and in the wide valley of the West;

"And where the sun, with softer fires,
Looks on the vast Pacific's sleep;
The children of the Pilgrim sires,
This hallowed day, like us, do keep."

New England has enlarged the dominion of her laws over no wider territorial limits than at the first, yet for her expanding population, for her institutions, her customs, her moral, social, political and religious influences, she has received a truly imperial extension. As an integral portion of the great Federal Republic, produced by the double act of Independence and of Union, in which she took so large and decisive a part, New England—losing nothing of her local identity and her express individuality—yet has her chief duties and responsibilities at present and in the future; and in every just estimate of what the vital forces of the Puritan character have hitherto effected, or may yet be expected to accomplish, *this* relation of New England must be largely considered.

While the influences of the occasion direct our view mainly to the past, still our contemplations, as it seems to me, would not wisely take the course either of antiquarian curiosity, or historical research, or controversial attack or vindication. All consultation of the past is vain, unless our questioning find out some key and guide to the future. Man escapes from the unsatisfying present, and lengthens the brief span of his personal existence, by laying hold upon the past, and reaching forward to the future; but of the past only is he secure, and in it he must find the forest and the quarry from which to hew out the shapely structures of the future. It was an annual custom among the Romans, in the more religious period of their history, as the year approached its close, for the augurs and other high priests to make a solemn observation of the signs, by which they might predict the fortunes of the republic for the coming year. This "*augurium salutis*," this presage of the public welfare, may well attend our pious homage to the memory of those who laid the foundations of our commonwealth, for in these founda-

tions shall we find the surest indications of its future fortunes, propitious or adverse. Nor to ourselves shall a brief communion with the stern natures, the elevated motives, the inspiring example of these remarkable men, be without a *personal* benefit; our feebler spirits and lapsing energies may catch some new vigor from this contact with their embalmed virtue, as of old the dead even was revived by touching the bones of the prophet Elisha.

These reflections seem naturally to present as an appropriate theme, for such consideration as the limits of the occasion will permit, THE HERITAGE OF THE PILGRIMS—*as we have received it from them, as we are to transmit it to our descendants.*

In attempting some analysis of the character, the principles, the conduct of the first settlers of New England, and an estimate of the extent to which they have affected our past, and are to shape our future, history, I should feel greatly embarrassed, were I not assured that the whole general outline of the subject is already in your minds and memories, that the true spirit and temper for its consideration are included in the disposition which unites you in this celebration. Much more should I feel oppressed, did I for a moment suppose that the interest of the occasion was at all dependent upon any novelty of fact or of illustration, or demanded a brilliant rhetoric or elaborate oratory. I know not what impressions the near examination of the acts and motives of the Puritan emigrants may produce upon others, but to myself their simple grandeur seems to need no aid from vivid coloring or artful exaggeration, nor to incur much peril from imperfect or inadequate conceptions. Resting upon the imperishable basis of real greatness of soul, their fame no praise can brighten and no censure dim.

The seeds of the movement which was to emancipate

religion from prelatical control, and re-establish the equality of men before their common Father, were sown in the English mind by Wickliffe. Though their dissemination had not been sufficient greatly to disturb the quiet of the Church or break the peace of the realm, yet when, one hundred and fifty years afterwards, Luther and Zuingle proclaimed, as with a trumpet, the great Reformation, and raised high the torch of religious liberty, the people of England, from this previous preparation, the more readily accepted the glad tidings, and welcomed the new light. While the pure flames of religious enthusiasm were burning in the hearts of his people, their sovereign, Henry VIII, threw off the Papal dominion upon a question, personal to himself, in which the Pope had proved uncomplaisant to his wishes. He usurped—for, in great measure at least, it was usurpation—the same supremacy in matters of religion which he had wrested from the Pope, and declared himself the head of the English Church, subjected the whole control of its doctrine and discipline to the temporal power, gave to the prelates a new master, but in no degree satisfied the true demand of the movement among his people, freedom of conscience and independency in religion. Preserving still an attachment to the religious tenets of the Church of Rome, he looked with equal disfavor, among his subjects, upon adhesion to the Roman pontiff, and desertion of the Romish faith. The succeeding reigns of his son Edward and his daughter Mary, gave aid and succor, the one to the new religion, the other to the ancient faith; and when Elizabeth, near the middle of the sixteenth century, assumed the crown, she found a people distracted by religious contentions. The singular position taken by King Henry had tended to divide the realm into three parties,—the Popish recusants,

who refused to acquiesce in the royal usurpation of the Pope's spiritual dominion,—the Protestant malcontents, unsatisfied with the rejection of the Pope's temporal authority while so much of the corruption of Popery remained in the ritual and worship,—and the supporters of the Church of England. From the accession of Elizabeth, by education and profession a Protestant, the more zealous reformers counted upon an active coöperation on the part of the Crown in the further emancipation and purification of religion. As matter of personal conviction, the Queen was not so fully weaned from the old faith, but that she retained the crucifix in her own chapel, and attempted its restoration in the churches; and through her whole reign she refused a legal sanction to the marriage of the clergy. But as matter of state policy and government she early adopted, and steadily pursued, a system still more fatal to the hopes of the party of progress in the Church. That great and politic compromise, the Church Establishment, for reasons wise or unwise, she and her statesmen adopted as the true and safe solution of the religious distractions of her people, and *conformity* to its dogmas and its ceremonies, was exacted alike from the sullen Catholic and the ardent Protestant. What till now had been a war of opinion, and about matters in themselves of much indifferency, between the two divisions of Protestants, became a war of persecution by the Government upon the offending faction. For non-conformity, to every degree of disfavor and annoyance, were gradually added the graver punishments of stripes, imprisonment, and death.

The party which contended for a more thorough and complete reformation of religion, and against whom the state-craft of Elizabeth conceived these machinations and executed these oppressions, received from its op-

ponents the name of PURITANS. They were neither sectarian nor schismatical—nor, as yet, dissenters; they were the front of the Protestant host in the still pending warfare with the Church of Rome; in their judgment the main battle of Protestantism in England was not completely won, much less its final triumph assured, and they would hold no truce with the ancient superstition. They would tolerate no defence of the surplice and the cap, of the cross in baptism, or the ring in marriage, on the plea that their retention would conciliate the Papists, and reduce that disaffection. With a large part of the people of England still clinging to the old faith, and much the greater portion of the benefices of the Church filled by dissembling Protestants, ready to "resume their mass-books with more alacrity than they had laid them aside," the Puritan clergy and laity refused their adhesion to the policy of the Crown, and struggled against conformity. To the strenuousness of their resistance to this specious compromise of the rights of conscience for the peace of the realm, it may well be thought, England owes her safety from relapse into Popery.

The party of the Puritans too, was neither small in numbers nor made up from any one class of society. Strongest in London and other large towns, and among the merchants and tradesmen, during the reign of Elizabeth, it also embraced, according to Hallam, a majority of the Protestant gentry of England, and included not a few eminent nobles. The clergy, below the grade of high ecclesiastics, most famous for talents, learning and eloquence, espoused the cause of progress, and so nearly did they come to a majority of the Convocation of 1562, that a proposition to abolish the offensive usages failed by but a single vote; the records of Parliament throughout the reign of Elizabeth show

that the control of the Commons was in the hands of the Puritans. Indeed, things were not far from the condition which they reached in a succeeding reign, when, as Carlyle asserts, "either in conscious act, or in clear tendency, the far greater part of the serious thought and manhood of England had declared itself Puritan."

The zeal of persecution did not long suffer the controversy to be waged upon mere forms and ceremonies, but transferred the conflict to a battle for the rights of conscience. The inquiries into the just limitations of might and right in spiritual matters, in turn, were directed to civil affairs, and the train of causes was set at work, which at length overthrew the English monarchy and built up this republic in the West.

I have thus far described the relations of the great body of the Puritans to the Reformation and the English Church, but there was gradually developed among them a sect or division which boldly pushed the questions at issue to their ultimate and legitimate solution; which threw off all connection with the Established Church, rejected alike the surplice and the bishops, the prayer-book and the ceremonies, and, resting upon the Bible, sought no less than to restore the constitution of the Christian Church to the primitive simplicity in which it was first instituted. These Separatists, as they were called, put in practice their theoretical opinions by the formation of churches in which the members were the source of all power and controlled its administration, and, in a word, applied to ecclesiastical organizations principles which, if introduced into civil government, would produce a pure democracy.

In the "mean townlet of Scrooby," in Nottinghamshire, recent investigations have accurately ascertained, was collected the Puritan congregation of Separatists,

from which proceeded the first settlement of New England. They united themselves in the simple and solemn compact of a church covenant about the year 1602, and found a place of worship, strangely enough, in an Episcopal manor-house belonging to the See of York, but in the tenancy of William Brewster. John Robinson soon became their minister, and for several years they there sustained, as best they might, the persecutions of the civil power, and maintained their worship. This Christian Church, collected from a simple agricultural population in a rude part of England, remote from any great centre of influence, was the seed selected, in the wisdom of Providence, for the plantation of a new community in this Western world. With the formation of this Congregational Church commences the history of New England, for this compacted, organized body, this social unit, made up and fitly framed together in England, and thus as an aggregate and perfect whole, transported to America, made the first settlement at Plymouth.

We at once perceive that we have here before us the ripened germ, ready to be severed from the parent stock, whence was to proceed the future growth, under the eternal law of development by which seeds produce, each after its kind. As yet this little, this peculiar community, had formed no conscious plan or project looking to the foundation of a new society, much less of an independent state. Yet, whatever of preparatory discipline it was to submit to in the interval, whatever circumstances, as yet uncertain, were to determine where and when it should germinate and be developed, the elements of weakness or of strength, the qualities decisive of the growth which should come from it, if any growth it should have, were fixed and complete. Here, then, is the true point at which to observe what

were the important elements and qualities both in the individual characters of these men, and in the solemn and intimate bond of connection that held them together,—in reference, always, to their fitness or unfitness as a vehicle for the transfer of the religion and civilization of the old to the new world, and in reference also to the nature of the institutions of which they were suited to become the founders.

In the first place, these emigrants were drawn from the bosom of the English *people*, in distinction from the court, the nobility, the gentry, the learned professions;—their condition in life was ordinary, alike removed from the enervation of wealth and the servility of poverty, and having all the independence which belongs to intelligent and laborious industry;—they were, in the main, a rural and agricultural people, and of the sober, reflective, self-dependent temper which such pursuits cherish; their condition, as among themselves, was *equal;* they stood together in their common manhood, undistinguished, save only by those differences which intellect, and character, and culture, make among men.

In the second place, they had all the instruction and experience in personal rights and their enjoyment, which even at that day distinguished the condition of Englishmen, and, outside of any special pressure of the Government in particular matters of state or church policy, were a large and valuable possession to the people of England. They might be oppressed by cruel, unjust or impious *laws*, but had important and, in general, efficient guaranties against oppression in violation of law. A common law, being nothing else than the adaptation of the immutable principles of general justice and common right to the ever-varying circumstances of human affairs, the public administration of justice, a participation as jurors in such administration,

security by the habeas corpus against illegal restraint, an inviolable threshold, and a representation in the Commons which controlled the supplies,—these were some of the rights of Englishmen in which the Puritan emigrants possessed a share.

But the traits which most command our attention, both from intrinsic dignity and the absorbing influence on their conduct, are the depth of their religious convictions, the purity of their religious sentiments, and the fervor of their Christian faith. If our Puritan forefathers in civil station and worldly estate ranked among the common people of England, the disdain of courtiers and the scorn of prelates, they seemed to themselves children of a nobler lineage, and consecrated of an elder priesthood than those who despised them. To them religion and *its* laws of worth and dignity were not only realities, but the sole realities; Christianity was not only true, but its spirit and its precepts were the all-sufficient guide and rule of life; God they not only revered, with a distant awe, as the Creator of the world and the Ruler of events, but in the boldness of a filial adoption confided in him as the Father of their spirits, the watchful Protector of their daily walk; wealth in earthly possessions, power in temporal sway, they counted as nothing beside the riches and the glories of the spiritual kingdom; the pride of life, the pleasures of sense, all pomp and magnificence seemed but dust and ashes to the substantial joys and effulgent splendors of the spiritual life. Not less was the indifference to the toils and hardships, the sufferings, privations and afflictions of the present time, begotten by the high hopes and sure rewards of their vivid faith. The enemies that they dreaded were the enemies of their souls, the encounters to them most formidable were with the great adversary, the evils they feared were

the frailty and the wickedness of their own natures, the victories they aimed at were over temptation and sin, the conquest they strove for was over their own spirits.

In an age when faith has grown colder, when religion is much less a matter of public and general thought, when outward and ostensible enterprises for the moral and spiritual advancement of man attract and absorb whatever activity is spared from purely worldly pursuits, these elevations of spirit seem, to many, inconsistent with the calm and sober performance of duty which marked the conduct of these men. Some stigmatize them as the vagaries of a vulgar fanaticism, others pardon them as the extravagancies of a generous enthusiasm, but *we* acknowledge them as an essential element in the agencies which were to operate great social and political revolutions at home, and found and build up a great nation abroad.

Passing from this brief and imperfect examination of the character of these emigrants themselves, mark now the peculiar association in which they were united, and in which they were to leave their native land and ultimately to seek these shores. It was an independent, isolated, Christian Church, part of no establishment, subordinate to no hierarchy, and having no relations outside of itself. I propose no observations, mystical or ecclesiastical, concerning it as a *church*, but simply a consideration of the principles on which its formation as a *social unit* rested, and in reference to its convertibility, when need should be, into an independent community and complete body politic.

And first we notice that this community was organized, as its fundamental discrimination from the system of prelacy, upon the notion that the members were the source and depository of all power, that by their elec-

tion all offices were to be filled, and that the suffrage was equal and universal.

We next observe that the tie which bound the members together had no reference to selfish interests or the pursuit of gain, but was that of brotherhood, and for the culture of their higher nature and the promotion of their supreme welfare. Mutual support and aid, counsel, sympathy, a bearing of each other's burdens, a participation in each other's joys and sorrows, conflicts and triumphs, were the right and the duty of each in respect to all.

Add to this, that this union was permanent, that it embraced the family as well as the individual; that it presupposed concert and consent as to the objects and ends of life; that it ever confirmed and constantly cherished unity of purpose; that it involved a thorough acquaintance with each by all in the most sincere and intimate sense; and that around all was thrown the solemn sanction of divine authority, and you have a little community with more of the true social spirit to hold it together, and less chance or scope for the operation of selfish discords to weaken or dissolve it, than ever has been or ever can be, otherwise constituted.

To this Puritan congregation the cruel alternative was soon presented, between expatriation and abandonment of their religious worship; for to this pitch had the civil power pushed its persecutions. They chose to turn their backs upon their homes and their possessions, and, to use their own language, "by joint consent they resolved to go to the low countries, where they heard was freedom of religion to all men." For twelve years, in patient, though ungrateful toil, in occupations unfamiliar and uncongenial, amid a crowded population, speaking a foreign tongue, and with customs strange to their English notions, they led an hon-

est life and maintained their religious worship. They have left a record of the reasons and the influences which induced them to leave Holland and seek the remote, unpeopled wilderness within the nominal sovereignty of England. It is quite apparent from a perusal of their own statements, that on leaving England they had no other view than a peaceable life with the enjoyment of religious liberty, looking no further; that as they advanced in years and their children grew up around them, the probable fortunes of their posterity were forced upon their attention. They foresaw that their individuality and nationality, their language, the very religion which was dearer than life or country to them, would be swallowed up in the general population of Holland. For themselves, they would have cared little whether their short sojourn before they were removed to "heaven, their dearest country," were in one place or another; but for their children and later posterity they desired the birthright of Englishmen, and for the pure and primitive forms of Christianity which they possessed, and at so costly sacrifice had preserved, they sought a permanent establishment and a wider diffusion.

Under these impulses, led by these motives, to enjoy liberty of conscience and pure scriptural worship, to enlarge his majesty's dominions and advance the kingdom of Christ; or, in other words, to found a new society where the Christian religion and English law should prevail, religious liberty flourish and a pure faith be preserved, our Pilgrim fathers projected and accomplished the perilous passage of the wide ocean, braved the unknown dangers of a wilderness, and on this day, two hundred and thirty-four years ago, landed on the Rock of Plymouth. Thus did they, with a true filial devotion, cling to the skirts of the ungracious

mother from whose bosom they had been so rudely repelled, and thus did the stone, which the builders of English liberty, and English law, and English power, rejected, become the head of the corner of our constituted state.

Well might Milton, the brightest star in the firmament of English, no less than of Puritan, literature, mourn the great loss to England from this emigration, led by the Pilgrims, and closely followed by so much of the worth and strength of the nation, and sadly forebode for the fortunes of the parent state thus bereaved. "What numbers of faithful and free-born Englishmen and good Christians have been constrained to forsake their dearest home, their friends and kindred, whom nothing but the wide ocean and the savage deserts of America could hide and shelter from the fury of the bishops. Oh, if we could but see the shape of our dear mother England, as poets are wont to give a personal form to what they please, how would she appear, think ye, but in a mourning weed, with ashes upon her head, and tears abundantly flowing from her eyes, to behold so many of her children exposed at once, and thrust from things of dearest necessity, because their conscience could not assent to things which the bishops thought indifferent? Let the astrologers be dismayed at the portentous blaze of comets and impressions in the air, as foretelling troubles and changes to states; I shall believe there cannot be a more ill-boding sign to a nation (God turn the omen from us!) than when the inhabitants, to avoid insufferable grievances at home, are enforced by heaps to leave their native country."

It has been the custom of poets, of orators, and of historians, as they looked upon this little fragment of population,—torn from the bosom of a powerful state, driven from the shelter of established law, outcast from

the civilization of the world, thrust, as it were, unarmed and naked into a fierce struggle with rigorous, inexorable nature,—to pity its weakness, deplore its trials, and despair of its fate. If the view be confined to the mere outward aspect of the scene and the actors, if you omit their real history and overlook their actual character and connection, if you would regard them as a casual group thrown on the shore from the jaws of shipwreck, or from some dire social convulsion, the picture of feebleness, of misery, of hopelessness, can scarcely be exaggerated.

But, unless my analysis of their character and deduction of their history has wholly failed of its purpose, we cannot resist the conviction that, as the beginning of a new community, as the foundation of an original and separate civil society, as the germ and nucleus of an independent political state, this band of first settlers included as many elements and guaranties of strength, of safety, and of growth, as lay within the whole resources of human nature, or could be added from the supports of a divine religion.

All the traits and qualities of personal manhood, and in as large measure as, before or since, their countrymen or ours have attained to, they possessed; the attendance of their wives and children carried into whatever strange wilderness a present home, and stamped the settlement as permanent, not fugitive; they were equipped with all the weaponry of substantial education, furnished with sufficient stores of ordinary learning, trained in a discipline of practical experience, better than proof armor in the warfare they were to wage.

Nor was the preparation of their spirits for the great undertaking less fit and sufficient. As they did not fear death, no terror could frighten them from their purpose; as they did not love pleasure, no present pri-

vations could appall them, no sensual attractions allure them back; as they were but as wayfarers upon the earth, with no abiding-place, pursuing only the path of duty, wherever they pitched their moving tent, each setting sun would find them "a day's march nearer home."

As the love of gain, the wild spirit of adventure, the lust of dominion, had no share in bringing them across the seas, so no disappointments or discontents of a selfish nature could enfeeble, distract, dissolve their union; as the bonds of their confederacy were spiritual and immortal, no natural afflictions or temporal disasters could absolve the reciprocal duty, or break the mutual faith, in which they were knit together as the soul of one man.

Esteeming, as we must, that our Pilgrim ancestors brought to these shores whatever of essential strength there was in the civilization which they left, and whatever of power there is in a living Christian faith,—that their coming was absolutely void of all guileful purpose, and their association vital in every part with true social energy, we may well consider the laments at the feebleness, and distrusts of the issue, of their enterprise, as more fanciful than philosophical.

What, then, though their numbers were few and their persons ordinary; what though the dark frown of winter hung over the scene, and the sad cry of the sorrowing sea-birds, and the perpetual moan of the vexed ocean, breathed around them; what though the deeper shadow of death, the sadder wail of the dying and the bereaved were in their midst; what though want had possession of their camp, and starvation threatened at their outposts? Strong in human patience, fortitude, courage to bear or to remedy whatever it was in human nature to endure, or in human power to cure, and for

the rest, mightier still in the supports of their sublime faith, with the prophet's fervor, each one of them could exclaim, "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

Equally propitious to the beneficent character of the institutions they were to build up was it, that, while they brought with them such amazing elements of vigor and freedom, they left behind them almost all that had deformed and burdened the development of the state, and all the incrustations and corruptions that had overlaid the Church and defiled religion. King, nobles, gentry, all fixed ranks, all prerogatives, all condescensions, all servilities, they were for ever, in a social sense, delivered from; the whole hierarchy, bishops and priests, canons and convocations, courts ecclesiastical and high commissions, rites and ceremonies, were at once thrown off and utterly ignored; all that could assist, confirm, enlarge and liberalize society, they brought with them, unembarrassed with aught that could thwart, trammel or impede its advancement.

That before the emigrants left Holland, they designed to become a body politic, using among themselves civil government, and choosing their own magistrates; that in preparation for their landing they made a formal compact or covenant to that end, and that, without break or interval from that moment, they and their descendants, to this hour, have maintained free government (notwithstanding it was so long colonial and dependent); that from the same stock their numbers were supplied and increased, and that from the same stock and under the same lead and impulses, the

Massachusetts colony was founded; that the Connecticut and New Haven colonies sprung from their loins, while that of Rhode Island grew out of their intolerance; and, in fine, that all New England, as it has been and is, grew up, as naturally as the oak from the acorn, from this seed planted at Plymouth, I need only to suggest.

The institutions founded by the fathers of New England were new in the affairs of men, and greatly in advance of whatever past experience had shown possible in human condition; the civil prudence of their age regarded them but as the experiments of the model and the laboratory, successful only by exclusion of the friction and disturbance of great and various interests, and by shelter from the stormy elements nursed in the bosom of every large society; the cold eye of tyranny yet watches for the hour when the heats of passion shall dissolve, or the frosts of selfishness shall crumble their whole fabric; still, their foundations stand sure, and their dome ascends and widens in ampler and ampler circles.

But the *spirit of liberty* is no new impulse in human conduct, no new agent in the history of states and nations; yet *it* is generally regarded as the main impulse in the action of our forefathers, which is without a parallel,—as the effective agent in their constructive achievement, which is without a precedent.

The truth is, with our Pilgrim fathers liberty never was valued as an end, though as a means to *duty* it was worthier than all other possessions, and dearer than life itself. Emancipation from existing authority they sought only to subject themselves to a more thorough discipline; loyalty to a ruler they replaced by obedience to law; they threw off the yoke of their king only to pursue the stricter service of their God. They cher-

ished, they cultivated, they sheltered, they defended, they watered with their tears and with their blood, the fair flower of liberty, but only that they might feed upon its sober, sometimes its bitter, fruit, *duty*.

The mere passion for liberty has overthrown many dynasties and torn in pieces many communities; it has an immense energy to upset and destroy; but here its work ends, unless it be attended by a sound conception and faithful acceptance of the grand constructive ideas of law and duty, to hold up the tottering, or to rebuild the ruined, state. We pronounce, then, that the highest fidelity to law, and the sincerest devotion to duty, were the controlling sentiments of our ancestors in their walk and work.

Nor did our Puritan fathers teach, either by lesson or example, that *all* men are capable of political self-government. Their doctrine and their practice alike reject such folly, and give this as the demonstration and the truth, that men capable of governing themselves as men, are able to maintain a free civil state as citizens. While they knew that a strong people neither need, nor will endure, a strong government, they no less knew that strength must be somewhere, in people or government, to hold any political society together, and their practical politics were directed by this conviction.

Nor was *equality of right* in the citizens relied on as an adequate social principle to preserve the peace, and advance and develope the power of the commonwealth. That, both from their actual temporal condition, and from their religious opinions, equality of right would be, in its just sense, recognized and acted upon, was inevitable. But equality of right, standing alone, is a principle eminently dissocial, and paralyzing to all high and worthy progress of the general welfare. It

may answer for a band of robbers to divide their spoils by, or victorious barons to apportion the conquered land. But join with equality of right, as did the first planters of New England, community of interest and reciprocity of duty, as the controlling sentiments, and you infuse a genuine public spirit, and evolve a strenuous social activity, which will never weary and never fail; you produce, indeed, the efficient causes and influences which have animated and directed the immense expansion of American society, the actual development of American character.

It is worth our while to observe, from the very earliest documents of the emigration and settlement, how well the necessity and the grounds of a true public spirit were understood, and how earnestly they were insisted on. In their letter from Leyden to the Virginia Company, Robinson and Brewster thus recite one of the grounds of just expectation for the success of the projected community. "We are knit together as a body in a more strict and sacred bond and covenant of the Lord, of the violation whereof we make great conscience; and by virtue whereof we do hold ourselves *straitly tied to all care of each other's good, and of the whole by every, and so mutual.*" In his parting letter upon the embarcation Robinson enjoins, "a thing there is carefully to be provided for, to wit, that with your common employments you join common affections, truly bent upon the general good; avoiding, as a deadly plague of your both common and special comfort, *all retiredness of mind for proper advantage*, and all singularly affected any manner of way. Let every man repress in himself and the whole body in each person, as so many rebels against the common good, all private respects of men's selves, not sorting with the general conveniency." And thus Cushman exhorts the

whole society, just a year after the landing: "Now, brethren, I pray you remember yourselves, and know that you are not in a retired monastical course, but have given your names and promises one to another and covenanted here to cleave together in the service of God and the king. What then must you do? May you live as retired hermits and look after nobody? Nay, you must seek still the wealth of one another, and inquire as David, How liveth such a man—How is he clad—How is he fed? He is my brother, my associate; we ventured our lives together here and had a hard brunt of it; and we are in league together. Is his labor harder than mine? Surely I will ease him. Hath he no bed to lie on? Why, I have two; I'll lend him one. Hath he no apparel? Why, I have two suits; I will give him one of them. Eats he coarse fare, bread and water, and I have better? Why, surely we will part stakes. He is as good a man as I, and we are bound to each other; so that his wants must be my wants, his sorrows my sorrows, his sickness my sickness, and his welfare my welfare; for I am as he is. And such a sweet sympathy were excellent, comfortable, yea, heavenly, and *is the only maker and conserver of churches and commonwealths;* and where this is wanting ruin comes on quickly." Such was their temper, such their intelligence, such their wisdom. So long as such sentiments pervade a community, it will feel no lack of public spirit, suffer no decay of public virtue.

Add to these principles, what is not so much a separate principle as a comprehensive truth, lying at the bottom of the whole enterprise, that the state and the church were made for man, and not man for the government and the priest—that the culture and development of the individual members of society, and not the

grandeur or glory of the body politic, were the superior and controlling objects—and that such culture and development should be religious and for the immortal life, and you have all the constituent elements and forces included in The Puritan Commonwealth.

And they were ample and adequate, and thus far have been so proved; for the days of small things and for the most magnificent expansion; for all the shocks and dangers that have beset the feeble plantations, the growing colonies, the heroic confederation, the united people. Nor has as yet appeared any inherent defect, or incongruous working in the system, which demands or threatens change. Radicalism cannot dig below its foundations, for it rests upon the deepest principles of our nature; philanthropy can build out no wider, for it recognizes the brotherhood of all men; enthusiasm can mount no higher, for it rises to the very threshold of heaven. No further strength or firmer stability can be added to it, for faith among men, "which holds the moral elements of the world together," and faith in God, which binds that world to his throne, give it its cohesion and its poise.

Some question has been made, where the Puritan emigrants learned, and whence they derived, the great thoughts of equality and freedom, so far in advance of the English liberty of that day, or even the present, so much deeper, and purer, and nobler, than any then existing civilization could have supplied. One of your own orators[1] has thought to trace the inspiration, through the religious exiles of Queen Mary's reign, who found at Geneva "a state without a king and a church without a bishop," "backwards from Switzerland to its native land of Greece;" as if unwilling that the bright flame of his country's freedom

[1] Mr. Choate's Oration, 1843.

should be elsewhere lighted, than at those same undying Grecian fires which have kindled the splendors of his own eloquence. I, rather, find the source of these divine impulses in the Christian Scriptures, whence so much else of the Puritan character drew its nourishment, and which they consulted ever, as an oracle, with wrestling and with prayer. I seem to see in the mature designs of Him, to whom a thousand years are but as one day, who moves in his own appointed times, and selects and prepares his own instruments, the re-enactment of the first scenes of the Christian dispensation, in the establishment of the Christian faith upon this unpeopled continent—with this new demonstration and this new power of its vital energy, as well for the reconstruction of all human institutions as for the regeneration of the soul—and hail the Pilgrim fathers as the bearers of a new commission, than which there has been none greater since the time of the Apostles.

Time, and your patience, fail me to insist upon the penetrating forecast and wide sagacity, the vast civil prudence and exhaustless fidelity with which our forefathers sought, upon these foundations, to rear a fabric of liberty and law, civilization and religion, for a habitation to their posterity to the latest generation. Yet I must observe that *all their care* was applied directly to the people at large, to the preservation and perpetuation of intelligence, virtue and piety among them; assured that, from this support, good government and free government were of as certain growth in the moral constitution of things, as is the natural harvest from seed well sown in a grateful soil. Accordingly, they founded a system of common education, not expecting to make the whole people learned, but to make them intelligent, and so protect them from that oppression which knowledge can practise upon ignorance; they

maintained the public administration of justice, and confined it to the common law system and procedure, not anticipating that each citizen would become as profound, or as erudite in his special science, as my Lord Coke, but intending that common right and practical justice should be subserved, and not defrauded, by all the profundity and erudition in the world; they employed the holy Sabbath, and gave it full measure in the division of the week, in public preaching, exhortation and prayer; not as a ceremonial expiation or a servile propitiation for the sins of the people, but for instruction to their understandings and confirmation of their faith; and above all, the Bible, the Bible in the family, the Bible in the school, the Bible in the church, was kept ever under the eyes and in the ears and in the hearts of the people, in childhood, in manhood, and in age; for Pope, Prelate and Puritan alike agreed that this book contained the oracles of their religion, and our forefathers knew, by impressive experience, that whichever, Pope, Prelate or People had the keeping of these oracles, held the keys of religious, civil and social liberty.

How, from these never-failing springs, for every occasion of the advancing communities, both civic virtue and martial spirit were supplied; how as early as 1643 the four New England colonies framed articles of confederation, which are the type of the general confederation of the Revolution and of the Federal Union; how in the Indian wars and the French campaigns, the warlike vigor of the people was developed and disciplined; how in the heroic toils and sacrifices of the war of Independence, and in the wise counsels and generous conciliations which made us a united people, New England bore an unmeasured, an unstinted share; how on the tide of her swelling population these traits of

her founders have been diffused and the seeds of their institutions disseminated, why should I relate? They are the study of yourselves and of your children.

Behold now in these,—in the great fame of the Puritan exiles, in their sublime pilgrimage, in the society they founded, in the States they built up, in the liberty and the law, in the religion and the civilization they established,—behold our HERITAGE from them. I have made no mention of the immense territory which our country's bounds include, but I have shown you the price at which it was all purchased, the title by which it is all held; I have not counted the heaped up treasures of your wealth, but I have pointed you to the mine whence it was all digged, to the fires by which it has all been refined; I have not followed the frequent sails of your commerce over the universal sea, but I have shown you, in the little Mayflower, the forerunner of your innumerable fleet; I have not pictured the great temple, which from generation to generation has been raised, the home of justice, the habitation of freedom, the shrine towards which the hopes of all nations tend, but I have explored its foundations and laid bare its corner-stone. This vast material aggrandizement, this imperial height of position, we may exult in, but they do not distinguish us from earlier, and now ruined, states; they form no part of our peculiar inheritance. Green grass has grown beneath the tread of other nations, and for them the vine has dropped its purple vintage, and the fields turned up their golden harvest; nature has crowned them with every gift of plenty, and labor gained for them overflowing wealth; uncounted population has filled their borders, victorious arms pushed on their limits, and glorious art, and noble literature, and a splendid worship spread over all, their graces and their dignities; but justice among men, the

main policy of all civil society, and faith in God, its only guaranty of permanence, were wanting or died out, and they were turned under by the ploughshare of Time to feed a nobler growth.

As we value this heritage which we have thus received, as we are penetrated with wonder and gratitude at the costly sacrifices and heroic labors of our ancestors, by which it has been acquired for us; as in each preceding generation we observe no unworthy defection from the original stock, no waste of the rich possession, but ever its jealous protection, its generous increase, so do we feel an immeasurable obligation to transmit this heritage unimpaired, and yet ampler, to our posterity, to maintain unbroken the worth and honor which hitherto have marked their lineage. This obligation can only be fulfilled by imitating the wisdom of our fathers, by observing the maxims of their policy, studying the true spirit of their institutions, and acting, in our day, and in our circumstances, with the same devotion to principle, the same fidelity to duty. If we neglect this, if we run wild in the enjoyment of the great inheritance, if we grow arrogant in our prosperity, and cruel in our power, if we come to confound freedom *in* religion with freedom *from* religion, and independence *by* law with independence *of* law, if we substitute for a public spirit a respect to private advantage, if we run from all civil duties, and desert all social obligations, if we make our highest conservatism the taking care of ourselves, our shame and our disaster will alike be signal.

Nor, if we will rightly consider the aspect of our times, and justly estimate the great conflicting social forces at work in the nation, shall we lack for noble incentives to follow in the bright pathway of duty in

which our fathers led, nor for great objects to aim at and accomplish. While we rejoice that from no peculiar institutions of New England does occasion of discontent or disquietude arise, to vex the public conscience, or disturb the public serenity; that the evils and dangers of ignorance and sloth are imbedded in no masses of her population, local or derivative; that not for her children are borne our heavy burdens of pauperism and crime; let us no less rejoice that, clogged by no impediment and exhausted by no feebleness of her own, *all* the energies of New England may be devoted to succor and sustain at every point of weakness, *all* her power to uphold and confirm every element of strength, in whatever region of our common country, in whatever portion of her various population.

Guided by the same high motives, imbued with the same deep wisdom, warmed with the same faithful spirit as were our ancestors, what social evil is there so great as shall withstand us, what public peril so dark as shall dismay us? Men born in the lifetime of Mary Allerton, the last survivor of the Mayflower's company, lived through the Revolution; men born before the Revolution still live. Of the hundred and one persons who landed from the Mayflower, one half were buried by early spring; yet now the blood of the New England Puritans beats in the hearts of more than seven millions of our countrymen. The slow and narrow influences of personal example and of public speech, by which alone, in the days of the early settlement, were all social impressions made and diffused, are now replaced by a thousand rapid agencies by which public opinion is formed and circulated. Population seems no longer local and stationary, but ever more and more migratory, intermingled and transfused; and, if the

virtue and the power, to which to-day we pay our homage, survive in the sons of the Pilgrims, doubt not their influences will soon penetrate and pervade the whole general mass of society throughout the nation; fear not but that *equality of right, community of interest, reciprocity of duty* will bind this whole people together in a perfect, a perpetual union.

ORATION

OF

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, M. D.

THE PILGRIMS OF PLYMOUTH

OF

JOHN PIERPONT, D.D.

1855

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

(1807-1897.)

JOHN PIERPONT

(1785-1866.)

THE orator of 1855, belonging to the present as fully as to the past, needs no introduction. This year the society returned to its early custom, and a poem formed a part of the program. Dr. John Pierpont, the poet of the occasion, was born in Litchfield, Connecticut. He studied law, but later entered the ministry and united with the Unitarian denomination. His poems were widely known, especially his occasional pieces.

The political element had naturally entered largely of late into the literary exercises of the society. Almost any political creed might have found satisfaction in this celebration at the Church of the Puritans. The verses of Dr. Pierpont, though he was then over seventy years of age, would have been quoted with enthusiasm by the youngest and wildest Abolitionist, while Dr. Holmes, his junior by thirty years, stood frankly for the most conservative element of the North. One sentiment of the orator in regard to slavery was met with a hiss, to which incident Dr. Pierpont referred at the dinner the following evening. "I have prepared," he said, "some lines, should it ever occur again, which would run somewhat in the following fashion:

> "Our brother Holmes's gadfly was a thing
> To Io known by its tormenting sting.
> The noisome insect still is known by this,
> But geese and serpents by their harmless hiss."

Dr. Holmes, rising, instantly replied:

"Well said, my trusty brother, bravely done.
Sit down, good neighbor, now I owe you one."

Dr. Holmes also recited at this dinner the following verses:

"New England, we love thee; no time can erase
From the hearts of thy children, the smile on thy face.
'T is the mother's fond look of affection and pride,
As she gives her fair son to the arms of his bride.

"His bride may be fresher in beauty's young flower;
She may blaze in the jewels she brings with her dower.
But passion must chill in Time's pitiless blast;
The one that first loved us will love to the last.

"You have left the dear land of the lake and the hill,
But its winds and its waters will talk with you still.
'Forget not,' they whisper, 'your love is our debt,'
And echo breathes softly, 'We never forget.'

"The banquet's gay splendors are gleaming around,
But your hearts have flown back o'er the waves of the Sound;
They have found the brown home where their pulses were born;
They are throbbing their way through the trees and the corn.

"There are roofs you remember—their glory is fled;
There are mounds in the churchyard—one sigh for the dead.
There are wrecks, there are ruins, all scattered around;
But Earth has no spot like that corner of ground.

"Come, let us be cheerful; we scolded last night,
And they cheered us, and—never mind—meant it all right.
To-night, we harm nothing—we love in the lump;
Here 's a bumper to Maine, in the juice of the pump!

"Here 's to all the good people, wherever they be,
That have grown in the shade of the liberty tree;
We all love its leaves, and its blossoms, and fruit,
But pray have a care of the fence round its root.

"We should like to talk big; it 's a kind of a right,
When the tongue has got loose as the waistband grew tight;
But, as pretty Miss Prudence remarked to her beau,
On its own heap of compost no biddy should crow.

"Enough! There are gentlemen waiting to talk,
Whose words are to mine as the flower to the stalk.
Stand by your old mother whatever befall;
God bless all her children! Good night to you all!"

ORATION

WE have come together into the inner circle of a triple cordon which surrounds us with its harmonious parallels. As members of a great Republic, gathered to speak with the freedom it gives to all, of the dead and of the past; if we choose, too, of the living and of the present; we pass the outer circle, and the folds of the national ensign overshadow us as Americans. As citizens or guests of a great metropolis, we cross the second line, feeling that the heart of the vast city is large enough to hold us with all our old loves and recollections, without jealousy—nay, rather with pride—that it could win and keep so many of us away from our birth-place. As children of a common descent, we enter the innermost ring of all, and clasp each other's hands, and exchange those looks and words that flash out in a glance, or an accent, the welcome which has in it a whole family-Bible full of cousinships and brotherhoods.

We hold ourselves thrice happy that each of these concentric circles helps to limit and define the vague affections of our common humanity. Let us not lose sight of the great ring that embraces all the others. Poor and provincial indeed is every gathering within the bounds of the wide Republic which does not remember that it is first of all a meeting of Americans. It were ungrateful to forget the privileges and pleasures

with which the stately city surrounds its permanent and transient guests; none ever forget its hospitalities but those who administer them. But for the closer and narrower area into which we have crowded to-day, leaving the busy world outside of its charmed circumference, we may naturally wish to speak a word of explanation.

We meet as a family meets, because blood will have its own affinities, and draw men together out of the mass with which they are mingled. There is iron in it, the chemists tell us; there is magnetism at any rate. So feel the stout Englishmen when they come together and make the roofs of your dining halls echo to "God Save the Queen;" so feel the keen Scotchmen when they meet to sing the songs of Burns over the pint stoup that follows the haggis; so feel the sons of St. David when they unite to give voice to their patriotism in strings of solid consonants which only Cambrian lips can utter; so feel the children of St. Patrick when they do honor to their patron saint, with all the overflowing devotion of their warm and joyous nature. It is good that they should all come together in their several places and times. All of us in these busy days, and this busy region, live little enough in the past and the distant; it is well to keep alive all that is left of a young heart in the bosoms of gray exiles.

We Americans, too, like these subjects of Britain, have our distinct families under the general roof of the common country which protects us all. Were it not so, many of the sympathies of our nature would not be called out. We must have something between the vague grandeur of the mighty Republic, and the sharp localism of the individual State, to fit a certain range of our affections. Our limited affinities have already formed groups at the South, and in the West, as well



as in the East; they determine natural lines of cleavage, like the invisible seams which run through the different planes of a crystal.

When geographical unity, and similar modes of life, and congenial beliefs, and long companionship in trial and prosperity, and the recollections belonging to a common descent, all coincide, then there will be a natural family, a sub-nationality, self-formed in the heart of the larger community to which it belongs. And all these circumstances unite in the case of New England.

Look at her geographically. Her domain is a corner cut off from the main piece; ample enough, were not the whole so vast as to make it seem little. The ocean opens the world of trade to her eastern border, but shuts off all immediate relationships on that side. An alien soil skirts her on the north; an irregular mountain barrier slopes its glacis along her western edge. To the south, Connecticut, sitting in her corner, puts out a thumb, as it were, of the same great hand which has Cope Cod as its crooked little finger, but without reaching the prize which seems to tempt the intruding member. All over this naturally isolated region are seen the same general features. New England is long and lean. The gaunt ranges of hills run side by side from north to south, like ribs that hunger has unclothed. Here and there are other huge prominences that summer tries in vain to soften with her graceful millinery. Katahdin, Monadnock, Ascutney, Wachusett and Saddle-mountain would take a fatter diluvium to smooth their staring protuberances than ever yet swept over New England. In the grooves of this uneven surface run a hundred rivers, broad or narrow as may be, but for the most part shallow and rapid. They were made for active toil, rather than to be the passive highways of navigation; few of them are

penetrated many miles by commerce; but they grind the corn, they spin the wool and cotton, they forge the iron, they cleave the great timbers which come from the booms that gather up pines and hemlocks as the farmer's rake gathers his rye or barley. A few narrow meadows, mere strips between the hills, have something of that spontaneous productiveness which makes the broad western valleys the lap of the world's harvest; but mainly, the soil says, as plainly as mullen and sorrel can talk, "Work or starve."

Out of these conditions springs a life with its own distinctive characters for good and evil; the New Englander is a man by himself; a pattern, and not a casting. He knows his fellow wherever he meets him, by his face, his speech, his habits, and his mental character. Whatever differences there may be among New Englanders, they agree for the most part in sturdy love of liberty, in thrifty ways of life, in habits of methodical industry, in reverence for religion and education, and in respect for law. Each man acts always with reference to a social organization which exists ready formed in his head. There are heroes among the settlers of the forest who have a more magnificent personal independence than he, but none that carries in his mind and character so many of the elements that go to the foundation of a State. In claiming these qualities for him, it is not implied that he monopolizes these or any other virtues, but that New England training does naturally include such qualifications as a part of the outfit with which she furnishes her emigrant children. To these grounds of fellowship and sympathy must be added the immediate family ties which bring so large a share of the inhabitants of the New England States into more or less near relations of blood and family connection, and the close bands that have

made them one people in the days of common trial and united effort. Add to all this the one fact of which this day will never cease to remind the New Englander, wherever its sun may find him, that he claims his descent from the Pilgrims of Plymouth, lineally it may be, virtually at any rate, and no man need ask more than once why we have entered that third circle of intimate communion, which is narrower than the common citizenship that belongs to most of us, and falls far within the broad zone of republican Americanism which includes us all.

The feeling which brings us together is one which finds its full expression only at certain appointed seasons. Two winter's evenings are its annual flowering times; but its roots lie deep in the heart, where reverence for truth, for courage, for faith and piety have their eternal sources of life. It is well that from time to time these primal elements in our moral being, these high instincts and pure affections, which are overlaid or forced into narrow channels by the relations of common life, should come forth and resume their true dimensions, and assert their slumbering supremacy.

But a few days will elapse before throughout all Christendom will be heard the sound of bells and the pealing of anthems; the congregations of the faithful will utter their united voices in every land; the village churches will send their praise up to Heaven fragrant with the breath of pines and spruces; the huge cathedrals will blow all their organ-pipes and shiver to their crosses with melodious thunders; the sands of the tropic and the snows of the frozen north will be alike imprinted with the knees of barbarian worshippers; the prisoner will clash rude music, as he lifts his fettered hands to Heaven; the sentinel will lean upon his musket and send a prayer upward from lips yet

trembling with the oaths of battle. Roll off these wintry clouds; set forward the index of the celestial horologe until the yellow sun of July stares fierce upon its dial. Throughout this broad land the sky shall be filled with new echoes and flame with unwonted fires. No hamlet too remote to be reached by the light of flashing rockets and the crash of roaring artillery. In a land of universal education, that day there shall be no school; in a land of industry, that day there shall be no toil. Old men will creep out to look upon the crowds and the banners; children of the noisy sex will swarm like bees, as loud and as dangerous with their licensed weapons, and maidens will look on at the pageant, unconscious that all they see is less than what they add to its harmonious contrasts.

Thank God for these flowering seasons of the human heart! Life is not meant to be all stem and leaves; the colors of Heaven are never stamped upon these. Strike out the festival of the church and the festival of the nation, and it is as if the year should close the two eyes with which it looks upon all that is best worth seeing above and below. We exist by toil that we may live by thought and feeling; all labor that does not end in nobler thought or better feeling is lost to its highest end. To lift us out of our labors into a loftier sphere, we ring the Christmas bells, so that all shall hear them, and make the night vocal so that none shall slumber while the sun is climbing up the east to shine upon our national anniversary.

And now, with mingled feelings of religious awe, and filial piety—and it may be with something more of family pride than the humble Pilgrims would have approved—we have come to our Feast of the Passover—the kindly meeting which is to freshen our recollections of the history we have in common, and make

us stronger to meet the duties lying before us. At such a time, how welcome is the eloquence which illuminates and emblazons the chronicles of the past with its pencil dipped in fire! How welcome is the learning that expands and illustrates the story of past heroism and clears away the doubts which jealous ages leave upon the motives of all who shame them by their actions! It has often been your privilege to listen to eloquence and learning, not rarely uttering themselves through the same lips. But the dignity of the hour does not depend on so poor a contingency as your choice of a speaker; you need only ask of him sincerity of purpose, a deep reverence for the past, so precious to your memories, a free utterance on all that relates to the present, without violating the courtesies becoming such an occasion, and if it may be, a cheerful and encouraging word for the future, to which the past and present are but the rude scaffolding. He has no claim to hold you very long who has not had many long nights to search, to compare, to meditate on subjects of study and thought already worn and rounded as the pebbles on the shore that received the wandering fathers of New England. He has still less claim to let the hour overlap its circle whose heavier task is to be followed by the resonant cadences and graceful harmonies of song, always a welcome change from the sober homeliness of prose; and, most of all, when the lips that are to speak are those that have blended their accents with the story of the Pilgrims, to live with it

> "Till the waves of the bay where the Mayflower lay,
> Shall foam and freeze no more!"

Let us divide our brief time between the recollections we owe to this occasion and the thoughts they

suggest to us, as we stand here to-day in the midst of a life which must soon turn into recollections, to be cherished with eternal gratitude, or blasted with the condemnation of those who are to come after us.

The story of the Pilgrims may be told for a thousand anniversaries, and the next year it will be fresh again. There are sights and sounds that Nature, with all her infinite variety, is never tired of repeating. You will find the wind-flower blowing, and the wood-thrush singing, in Plymouth woods still, as the Indians had known them ever since the days of the Mastodon. We need not always recount all the names on the sacred list, nor tell the sad, brave story over, in all its desolate grandeur of ideal and starving misery of detail. But the picture, sketched, or finished, shall always be held up; if it is only for a moment, we will lift it as the Host is lifted in Romanist processions, and reverently uncover before it. The story it tells may be an old one; but Christmas will tell one still older; and the world has not tired of Christmas yet.

No scepticism questions the motives that drove the Pilgrims to Holland. Men do not emigrate as they did to a land of aliens, speaking a strange tongue, a land full already, and offering them no temporal advantage, but rather endless losses and sacrifices, without some dire necessity. The story of their attempted departure and arrest, of their secret embarkation by night, and of the sullen dismissal of their wives and children at last, as creatures that had no home to go to, is itself an eternal witness of the previous martyrdom they had undergone for conscience sake. It is the death-struggle, and it tells of the death-blows that had gone before it. This pilgrimage was only another stage in the weary exodus of the Reformers, however called, that had begun in the days of Mary. Nor did

they always find rest where they had sought refuge. In the middle of the preceding century, many of the exiles of Frankfort had become twice exiles, you remember, rather than accept King Edward's service-book at the hands of the future Bishop of Ely. Those forms which are to us imposing, venerable, affecting, even if they are not our own chosen modes of worship, had become identified with the tyranny of spiritual usurpers in the minds of the Puritans; the advocates of a pure and simple form of worship. Rather than submit to have these observances forced upon them, they removed to Basle and to Geneva.

And so our own Pilgrims, after a residence in Holland long enough to have naturalized them to some extent, found cause to remove once more from their adopted home. Where should they go? In France, in Flanders, in Germany, in Switzerland, there were places where they might serve God according to their own faith; but what else would they find there? Another alien people, another new language, a life to begin over again, a loss of nationality, a hopeless separation from the home of their affections, an eternal exile, without even the sense of recognition and protection which keeps alive the national spirit of colonists. They were poor men; they and their children were to live by manual employments mostly. As they looked upon their countrymen now established in foreign lands, for more than two generations, they saw them gradually melting into the people by whom they were surrounded. The very names by which they were called had become transformed, and the sturdy insular blood was breeding out its features, to become merged in that of the laboring masses of other races.

And what were those "manifold temptations of the place" of which the Pilgrims complained? If History

does not tell us, Art is not silent. In the brutalities immortalized in all their shame by the pencils of Teniers and Adrian Brauwer and Van Ostade; in the vulgarities which stand revealed even amidst the flashes of Rembrandt's startling splendors; we can see what were the temptations to which they shuddered to expose their children, the sober English youth and the chaste English maidens. The boors that sat for their portraits to the Dutch and Flemish painters were growing up by the side of these very children. Had the Puritans not again become the Pilgrims, the process of degradation for many among them, must have been a natural and fatal consequence. Some future Carver or Bradford might possibly have figured on canvas as a ruffed and shovel-hatted burgomaster; or the features of a second Miles Standish have graced the walls of the Stadthouse at Amsterdam, in that glorious train-band, the breathing miracle of Vander-Helst. But how many of them would have sunk into the subjects of those sordid interiors where the pipe and the mug and the man are equally excellent in art, and equally elevated objects of study, we may guess, if we take the census of the painted magistrates and the pictured clowns, and reckon up the chances that an operative's son should become the one or the other!

Thus we need not seek for lower motives than those which they themselves alleged as the cause of their desire of removing from Holland. Nor need we wonder that they preferred to found a new English State, one in which their language and nationality might be preserved, rather than blend themselves with the foreign people of any continental nation. If to these reasons were added some impulses arising from the spirit of adventure, the ambition of increasing the bounds of the British Empire, and even the hope of profit, it only

shows that, in becoming martyrs they had not ceased to be men; and that, while their whole course proves that they were ready to sacrifice home, comforts, health and life to principle, they had the sense and the spirit which make other colonists the heroes of story, who have no pretence to the higher aims which governed all other considerations with the Pilgrims.

It was an old fable that Io, beloved of Jupiter, and changed by him into a heifer, to hide her hated beauty from the jealous queen of Heaven, was driven from her still meadow by the persecutions of a gad-fly, sent by her legitimate rival. Stung to madness, she rushed forth, restless, far wandering. She raged through Scythia, and across the snowy Caucasus, and over the Cimmerian Bosphorus, the same just ploughed by the twin Armada of the Allies; through the land of the one-eyed Phorcides, the one-eyed Arimaspians, to the cataracts of the mysterious Nile, and so on down to its city-strown Delta. Here she resumed her form; she became the mother of a line of kings, and was enthroned among the divinities as the Egyptian Isis.

In this story, as in that of Europa, we see the gods called in to account for the colonization of ancient races in remote regions. Fantastic as sounds the conceit of the goaded Io, it has the grandeur almost of the Hebrew prophets in the passionate declamation of Æschylus, as through her lips he tells the story of wild adventure by sea and land. Out of so little a cause—the bite of a teasing insect—sprang a new dynasty of earth, and a new throne in the courts of Heaven.

There are gad-flies with broader wings and longer stings, that the gods—nay, let us drop our heathen phrase—that God uses to drive abroad his servants who are to scatter the seeds of empire. Out of the smouldering passion of an unloved queen and a child-

less wife came the first edict that stung the forefathers of the Pilgrims into exile. Out of the imperious will of an unmastered virgin came the mandates which alienated the Puritans forever from the Church of England. Out of the conceit and arbitrary insolence of the learned fool that played the royal school-master for the British people, came the impatient and petulant orders that drove the alienated separatists across the channel to find a home among strangers; a home, but not a final resting place; for Providence stung them out of this retreat that its larger ends might be fulfilled. Say not that ancient fable is more trivial than modern history, when the passions of kings and queens, aggravated by all the little personal causes that make men swear and women scold, and both grow tyrannical, are suffered to mingle in the destiny of nations. Very thankful let us be that there are no such gad-flies to help us colonize our Pacific empire; the species *œstrus coronatus* is not a product of the soil we tread upon!

Once more, then, these poor souls are to set forth; men, women, children, with their small possessions, huddled into the little crowded vessel named from the tenderest of the flowers, and sent on the rudest of errands. O, the dreadful Atlantic! When in the wild autumnal tempests the black water piles itself like a wall, and drops like a crashing roof upon the deck of some vast liner that could literally have taken the Mayflower as her long-boat, how terrible is the groan from her mighty hollows, and how the blow shivers through all her knotted knees and springing timbers! What can we say of that half-winter voyage in a little unsafe vessel, choking with its load of life, that would be exaggerated? That death should have but once touched them, is the most wonderful part of the story. The

death-angel was waiting for them on the sandy shore of Patuxet. We send our exploring expeditions to the remotest north; and we think it, and justly think it, a sad proof of the hardships they have encountered if they leave three or four graves behind them in the frozen earth. When the first winter had passed, half the Pilgrims were gone; but there were no mounds to mark where their bodies lay. Such a record of loss and evidence of weakness, would have been too dangerous a confession. So the ploughman, with tingling feet, drove his share over the place where the dead were buried, and the tall grain was garnered from its hallowed surface, with thoughts not of the harvest above, but the wasting spoils of the Destroyer that lay below. The story lived in tradition, that it was on a bank not far from the place where the Pilgrims landed, that these first victims, worn out by fatigues and wretched exposures, were hidden away from all but the sad hearts they left behind them. During the past year, this sacred soil was disturbed in the course of making some necessary excavations. Human bones were uncovered; and the question arose whether they were those of the native races, or of the victims of that first dreadful winter. I was asked to look upon these relics, and give an opinion as to the race to which they belonged. A look was enough; but a careful comparison was made between these and the characteristic remains of the Aborigines, that no shadow of doubt might remain. Yes! These were the bones that barred in and domed over the souls of the first that perished from among the heroic Pilgrims! The mortal relics of these immortal martyrs were before us. No vulgar curiosity, staring with greedy eyes through the mask of science, keeps them to be gazed at among its wonders. Restored to the dust from which they were taken, not without honor

and tearful remembrance, they rest by the side of those from which they were briefly separated.

I have touched, as I promised, upon the familiar story of the first days of the self-exiled colonists. It can never tire in the memory of their descendants. Orators whose lips are yet unformed to speech; poets whose voices have as yet caught no melodious tones from the angels they shall hear in dreams; artists whose conceptions slumber in unmingled colors and unquarried marbles, will arise in successive generations to commemorate them. Even now the gratitude of the children of the Pilgrims is meditating some memorial of their lives, to add glory, if it may be, to the place which they made illustrious by their first landing and residence. Is it not right, and more than right—is it not a duty, for one who is addressing those most largely interested in such a pious effort, to speak plainly his views, even if they may happen to differ from those of some for whose opinion he has great consideration? It is not by displays of art, I venture to think, that we can best honor the soil of Plymouth, and the memory of its colonists. The sea is their eternal monument so long as its blue tablet shall glisten in the light of morning. The lonely island where they passed their first "Christian Sabbath" will stand until winter has scaled off the storied surface of the most enduring monolith. The bleak sand will be there, and the stern rocks forever, and December will sheet them with the snows that make them doubly desolate, until the heavens are shrivelled as a scroll. That is not the place for Art to come, with her elaborate conceptions, to lead away the hearts of living pilgrims from the memory of those plain and rudely clad men and women. God forbid that their precious dust should be scattered in digging foundations for some ambitious Valhalla that is to make Plymouth the

Mecca of *dilettanti*, and call in the sister arts to intrude their academic graces between us and the one single, sad, glorious memory that hallows the bay and the hill, and every spot where the feet of the Pilgrims trod or their eyes rested! If a memorial is called for, it should, as it seems to me, have for its two leading qualities simplicity and durability. If art is furnished with a *carte-blanche*, and told to rival the moral grandeur of the scene with the ideal beauty of her conceptions, it can only end, we may fear, in a failure which will be a disgrace, or a success which will be a misfortune. If I could finish the Cologne cathedral with a word, and transport it with a wish, the last spot in New England I would choose for it would be the landing place of the Plymouth Pilgrims. It is a rule that artists know well enough, not to let cross-lights shine on what they wish to display to advantage. The serene and heavenly smile of those devoted men and women has for its natural background, if so trivial an expression may be used, the scowl of the bare landscape around their place of refuge. Thus surrounded, one impression dominates all others in the mind of him who seeks the holy place to live over the days of the struggling colonists. This is the impression that a misplaced artistic display would do its best to confuse with its cross-light. Overcome it, it never can; point to the levelled bank and say, "There lies the dust of John Carver, and all the bold men and patient women that perished around him," and our thoughts are nearer Heaven already than the tallest structure of art can climb with its aspiring cap-stone!

Since these words were written, I have seen the proposed plan, and learned something more of the intentions of the public-spirited sons of New England who have interested themselves in the great work proposed.

I know the genius of the artist, and cannot withhold my admiration of his design. The names of the friends of the undertaking are enough to assure us that any plan they offer to the New England public will be conceived in a noble spirit, and pressed to its fulfilment with vigor and perseverance. They will listen to any fellow-citizen, I doubt not, who asks them to reflect once more before their final decision, whether that is the best place for the magnificent monumental structure they contemplate, and whether that is the best monument for the place. Pardon me for uttering my thought plainly. On the very heart of the great city of the Puritans, and nowhere else, should be worn this jewel of Art, which the gratitude of their children will have of such royal splendor. The plain village should content itself with the plainest and most durable of records to mark all its chief places of interest; it is rich enough with these without asking to wear the ambitious ornaments that belong only to the great centres of art and wealth, where the world can see them, and where they are in keeping with the surrounding objects. These views may be wrong, but they are not hasty. It were a pity to be precipitate where an error will be beyond remedy; to spend half a million and have the result called the "Plymouth Folly;" to give some future poet of the Pacific shore a chance of saying with Shelley—

> "I met a traveller from an antique land
> Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
> Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
> Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, . . .
> Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
> Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
> The lone and level sands stretch far away."

These slight and imperfect allusions to the story of the past, leading to the question as to the fitting monumental record to be reared in its remembrance, have brought us, unintentionally it might seem, but not prematurely, face to face with the present. A glimpse at the outer and inner life of New England, as her children remember it, or now look upon it, is not inappropriate, I trust, to this occasion and this assembly. You had rather, I doubt not, that I should speak my own feelings and opinions plainly, than reflect the popular sentiment of the time for the sake of any momentary impression that might win a little cheap applause. If there is a trace of questionable conservatism in any of my remarks, bear with me kindly; the antidote will follow close upon the poison, and the burning words of my ever-youthful associate will correct any mischief that might be ascribed to a shade of premature senility in my own sober utterances.

It is hard to draw a picture of New England country life without making a portrait which the fancy, at least, of many will gift with a resemblance to their early recollections. Is there not more than one here who remembers such a place as this which is now set before him? It is an ancient-looking brown house; brown with that peculiar tint that belongs to weather-stained pine, and is the natural complexion of unpainted New England houses. It fronts with two fair stories to the road; but if you take it in flank, you see that the roof runs backward with a great slope to within a few feet of the ground. One huge square chimney rises through the centre of the ridge-pole; a tall poplar, its emulous companion, has overtopped it, and drops a few leaves every autumn down into its black throat. A broken millstone gives a certain dignity to the main

entrance at whose threshold it lies. That is the barn, of course, vast, brown, like the house, with a ring of swallows' nests, like barnacles, all round the eaves; there ought to be a swing inside, and plenty of hens' nests, and secret deposits of ripening apples in holes of the haymows; we should find them all, no doubt, if we went in and knew where to look. Ever graceful and beautiful, the well-sweep, with the clanking iron-bound bucket, and the heavy stone, its counterpoise, stands a little back and at one side. The stone walls must have been laid more than fifty years, to judge by their present look; all the stones seem to have grown into companionship, and harmonize together as if they had always lain as they lie. The lichens on them are like the seals on royal treasures; they show with their broad unbroken stamps that nothing has been disturbed for many a long year. There is the orchard; there are trees in it famous for early apples, and limbs of trees that the boys knew well for the fruit they bore; wonderfully sagacious are boys at detecting a fast graft on a slow tree; there are fifty men that remember fifty such boughs while I am speaking. Of course, we do not forget the crooked footpath running across the lots to our neighbor's farm; that curious little solitary highway that turns and twists and starts aside for no conceivable reason; all footpaths in the fields look as if they were trodden out by lovers or madmen. Not far off was the wood where the sweet fern breathed its fragrance and the bayberry repeated it; where the checkerberry spread its aromatic leaves and berries and the black birch imitated its flavor with its bark; so economical is New England nature in the matter of perfumes and spicery. O, the remembrance of the early days passed amidst these homely scenes! Of tumbling in long grass, and sucking of honeyed clover, and bur-

rowing in mountainous haycocks and climbing of elbowed apple trees; of waking to the clamor of twittering swallows, and sleeping at the curfew of purring crickets; of Indian corn forests where, being little, you walked unseen, while the brocaded leaves grated and crackled as you rustled between the stalks; of wild cherry trees, with bark as bright and brown as fresh bronze, where the robins fought and scolded for the small berries; of old elms where the fire-hang-bird swung her long purse with the half-dozen eggs in it; nature's liberal reckoning when she gives change for an old couple, with or without feathers; of the chestnut tree that dropped its burs at the first frost, gaping like dead shell-fish on the seashore; of the sweet music that is in the open air from the days when you hear the soft breathing of the cows as they crop the tender grass, to the hot July noons when the mower passes through the purpled red-top and the heavy nodding herdsgrass, the measured respiration of his scythe sighing over each rank as it falls with all its lances and pennons; and later still, when the red leaves crackle under foot, and the wild-goose wedges steer southward, heard high in the frosty air; and at the last, when the wind whistles in the bare trees and the ice snaps in the ponds like the strings of an overstrained harpsichord, and so the frozen palms of winter crash out the last chorus of the year's symphony!

If you were born and bred among such sights and sounds as these, they will never die out of your remembrance. It is hard if a man who works in poisons shall carry them about with him ever after, and nature's kindly atmosphere breathed in so long shall not make a part of our systems and run in our blood as long as our systems hold together and our blood flows. This is the privilege of the young man of New England

birth; nature, not wholly rough and uncultivated, not as in many newer sections of the country, still reeking with undrained morasses that breed disease, and deformed with unsightly ruins of the forest that defy the spirit of beauty to find a resting place among them; but nature subdued and humanized, without being deprived of its greenness and fragrance, is his birthright; it gives him lessons of beauty no counting-room can smother with its ledgers; it gives his soul a horizon no lines of warehouses can so wall in that he will not see its blue heavens through them; it gives him an inward sanctuary of peace and repose that the streets can never shake him out of; let him tread the grass for fifteen summers, and then plod the pavement forty years, and his dreams will still be of running barefoot among the clover.

The recollections of the past on which we pride ourselves, the pleasant remembrances that shed their light over the New England home, which so many of us recall with tender affection, all lead us to the question, whether we are worthy of the past which we inherit and the land which we love? It is too late to ask us to be true to the faith of our fathers; we desire to be false to many of their superstitions, which we cannot deny, and to their intolerance, which we need not attempt to excuse. But if we are true to the spirit of their religion, which recognized a divinely illuminated conscience as the Supreme guide; if we have carried out those principles of individual development of which they laid the foundations, and which find their expression in the greatest freedom of knowledge to all, and the purest practicable self-government; if, with all our imperfections, we have done something to lift Christianity out of its technical enclosures into the broad fields of practical benevolence; if we have, however

blindly, struggled sincerely and strenuously with the public sins of our time, then we are not wholly unworthy of our descent and our heritage.

Is the intellect of New England not thoroughly awake? We are almost ashamed to think how large a part of all the best thinking and writing that is done in the country either comes from her soil directly, or at least has passed through her intellectual alembic. There is something unnatural in it; either she overstimulates her children, or some Bœotian materialism is keeping minds down elsewhere. Let others repeat the catalogue of her theologians, her philosophers, her historians, her poets, her story-tellers; it has been done, oftener, we trust, in self-defence than in bravado, until the list has become familiar and slightly tedious. But I will ask you if it is not startling to take the map of the Union and cover New England with your forefinger, and then spread both open hands over the rest without hiding it, and count in parallel columns the names that the world knows from all that vast expanse on one side, and those of equal note on the other, to whom this little strip has given birth, or a home, or an education? It is too serious a matter for boasting; it is a phenomenon, a portent; the mind of the country is in poor training, or it would never happen that such a shred and corner should be allowed to do so large a share of its thinking.

Are there any that think the heart of New England is asleep? We claim no pre-eminence for her; we should blush for the rest of the country, if we did not recognize in many sections of it a generous emulation in works of public charity, that shames away every invidious comparison. But it is not too much to say that her proverbial ingenuity is as active in opening new channels for benevolence as in the invention of

labor-saving machinery. The intensity of life among her people, joined with a climate that tries, if it does not impair the stamina of the imported races, gives rise to many forms of infirmity. There is hardly one of these unprovided for by her public charities. There is no generous enterprise to which she is not ready to contribute her money and her labor. But while we make this claim, let us not forget that there is a self-devotion, far higher than any to which New Englanders have been called in the present generation, and of which the high-souled Southern people, whom we so often hear named only to be reproached, have given us, during the past year, a lofty illustration. Need I mention the pestilence-stricken cities, and the devoted army of martyrs that laid down their lives as freely as the "noble six hundred" gave themselves away to the cannon mouths of Balaklava; but without a trumpet to sound the charge, with no order from human lips to urge them on, with no earthly honor in prospect as the reward of victory? We dare not place the noblest charities of New England by the side of this glorious self-sacrifice in which she had no part. We cannot doubt that if the hour of need should come, such souls would shine out from among her people; all we claim for her is that she discharges well the duties of an easier benevolence; that her heart is not resting while her brain is so busy.

We are proud of her present, then, as of her past; proud that there is so much life in her intellect and her sympathies. Soberly proud of her, and ready to see if with all this that we love to contemplate, there is not something to regret, and something to fear in her character and destiny.

There is no need of troubling ourselves for the foolish talk about her ultraisms and heresies. They are

only the necessary result, and they form the natural index, of her intellectual activity. Some of her ultraisms are, no doubt, destined to be truisms in the next generation. Some of her heresies will, probably enough, be very orthodox in less than fifty years. But take them for what scoffers call them, and they mark that the scouts of knowledge are at the outposts of the great camp, where the voice of the sentries from the opposing hosts of truth and error are often mingled, and each is liable in the darkness to confound his ally with his enemy. Trust the beneficent averages of an all-wise Providence. The Creator has no fear of extremes; their presence marks the vigor of the life out of which they spring; from them flow strength and heat, inward through the deep columns of mind of which they are the opposite poles. Out of the same people comes in one century the remorseless reasoner, who drives his terrible logic to conclusions on which, as many will tell you, the only rational comment is the howl of despairing insanity; and in another century the mild philosopher who husks off all the technicalities of Christianity and unmagnetizes all its soul-subduing phraseology, turning it, as some will have it, into mere heathenism; but, although you or I may be frightened at the doctrines of one or the other, do not think religion is in danger, because such souls are born into the world from time to time. May you not see two of the most robust brains of New England, at this very moment, one of them challenging universal allegiance to the most absolute of spiritual despotisms, and the other asserting a freedom which owns no law but its own convictions? God makes an idol-worshipper with one hand and an iconoclast with the other. Wo to the land that has no enthusiasts, no fanatics, no madmen! It is the lethargy of intellectual and moral death alone

that can exempt the mind of man from such exceptional excesses and occasional disorganizations, as the accidents of its mortal condition.

With these feelings, we might perhaps look without apprehension on the attitude taken by a largely prevalent popular opinion, as to certain great questions that come directly home to us all, as citizens and as lovers of our common country. The extreme temperance movement is of New England origin. The anti-slavery passion burns most fiercely in New England bosoms. But here the difficulty is, that while opinions on all merely speculative subjects find their just mean at last, in spite of the extremes of fanaticism; opinions that pass into the shape of statutes; opinions that, once carried out, change the relations of states to each other, prevent their own just balance from being reached, by the weight of positive legislation which they rivet to the scale they would have preponderate, or by corroding and destroying the very pivot, the even play of which can alone settle the true level of conflicting principles and interests.

Is there any offence in saying that one may recognize the crowding Judaism of the Puritan legislators in the attempt to enforce a statute which no solitary despot would be like to venture? New England is answerable for all the good and evil of the famous "Maine Law;" for all the wretches it may save; for all the hypocrites, and rebels, and law-haters it makes. As a moral *tour de force*, it is certainly beyond anything in modern legislation. It shows that the old Puritan conscience is as much alive as ever. Does it not also show the same spirit of provincial tyranny that peopled Rhode Island with fugitives from Massachusetts and her sister colonies two centuries ago?

In the meantime, Nature enters her silent protest.

The banks of the Ohio are glowing with their purple vintage, and,—oh, shame!—the hills of New Hampshire have turned traitors to the stern New England ordinance, and their grape juice has ripened into not unpalatable wine. The law of Maine will hardly take effect while the law of fermentation remains unrepealed on the pages of Heaven's statute book. The strictest Sabbath edict never could keep the Puritan ale from working on Sundays. Whatever good may have been produced directly in the forcible suppression of vice and diminution of crime, a law made to be habitually and openly violated is a frightful demoralizer of society. A law notoriously despised by many that appear as its public advocates; which takes many a vote from the same hand that an hour later is lifted trembling to the voter's lips with the draught that quiets at once his nerves and his conscience; such a law deserves to be studied with a larger view than that which merely embraces its action upon a single vice. Let those who advocate it, at least remember that it involves the whole truthfulness, the whole loyalty, of society, in addition to the special object named upon its face.

It would be a mockery to speak of the present moral aspect of New England, and not allude to her position with reference to the great question in which the destinies of the whole country are involved.

The same conscientiousness which alone could have rendered possible the passage of that extraordinary law just referred to, shows itself in the deep feeling with which the whole subject of slavery is regarded. No sin of our own, not even intemperance, is so perpetually before the conscience of New England as this detested social arrangement of our neighbors. There is hardly need of saying that we all agree in saving every inch of American soil we fairly can for freedom, and reduc-

ing our involuntary participation in slavery to the minimum consistent with our existence as a united people. The question is, whether New England, bound up with a group of confederate sovereignties, cherishes the right temper and uses the right language to her slaveholding sister States.

There is no denying that there is a manly logic in the extreme left of abolitionism. Tear the Constitution to tatters, empty the language of its opprobrious epithets on the men of the southern section of what has been foolishly called our common country, and take the consequences. The ultra melanophiles accept all the possibilities of such a course with a boldness that would be heroism if it were only action instead of talk; that is at any rate consistent and true to its premises. We always have a respect for a principle carried out without compromises or coalitions to round off its edges, so that it may be rolled by politicians, instead of being lifted and borne in the arms of true reformers. And this respect we have for the men of the extreme party; we cannot change the definitions of traitor and treason as the dictionaries insist on giving them; but we must concede to these confederates logical heads as well as daring and often eloquent lips. We feel for Othello, even in his murderous delusion; and these are our political Othellos, who proclaim that our boasted Liberty, with her fair face and matronly air, is a courtezan, and would treat her as Desdemona was treated, but for the machinery of retribution which is close at hand.

But from those who do not profess to repudiate the fundamental compact and the general laws of their country, we may be pardoned if we ask an equal degree of logical consistency. They must either annul the contract made by their fathers, or keep it, not according to any ingenious interpretations they may choose to

put upon it, but with the same punctilious honesty and honor that high-minded men show in their private dealings. If it involves a sin, they are accomplices, and have no right to open their lips against it until they have washed their own hands clean from its stains. You may plead as a moralist with a Turk or a Mormon, to give up nine of his ten wives. But if you enter into a partnership with him, and agree to return the truant ladies of his household against their will, for a certain consideration, or if your fathers did, and you hold to the agreement, you have forfeited the right to declaim against polygamy.

It is, perhaps, owing to the violence of the extreme party, and the want of moral power that springs from the false position of many of the more moderate opponents of slavery, that so little impression has been made upon the feelings and opinions of slaveholders. We have labored for a whole generation, and they tell us we have not made out our case against them. We have convinced ourselves a hundred times over, and they lay their hands on their hearts and say, "We have listened to your arguments, and grant you nothing—nothing." Slavery, then, is amongst us exactly like any physical fact. It has proved of no more avail to reason against it than it would have been to launch a syllogism against the embattled crests of the Alleghanies. The question, therefore, comes plainly before us, shall we of New England, men of the front rank, standard-bearers by our position and antecedents; shall we of the North feel and act to these Southern men as equals and brothers; shall we treat them always in the spirit of Christian love; or shall we proscribe, excommunicate, anathematize, vituperate and irritate them until mutual hatred shall ripen into open warfare?

The question of interfering races is a very terrible

one; it never was, and perhaps never will be, settled according to the abstract principles of justice. Look at the aboriginal inhabitants of the land we occupy. It pleased the Creator to call into existence this half-filled outline of humanity; this sketch in red crayons of a rudimental manhood; to keep the continent from being a blank until the true lord of creation should come to claim it. Civilization and Christianity have tried to humanize him, and he proves a dead failure. Theologians stand aghast at a whole race destined, according to their old formulæ, to destruction, temporal and eternal. Philanthropists mourn over them, and from time to time catch a red man and turn him into their colleges as they would turn a partridge in among the barn-door fowls. But instinct has its way sooner or later; the partridge makes but a troublesome chicken, and the Indian but a sorry Master of Arts, if he does not run for the woods, where all the *ferœ naturœ* impulses are urging him. These instincts lead to his extermination; too often the sad solution of the problem of his relation to the white race. As soon as any conflict arises between them, his savage nature begins to show itself. He dashes the babes' heads against their fathers' hearthstones—as at our Oxford—a heap of stones still shows you where he did it; or flings them out of windows, as at Haverhill; he mutilates his prostrate enemy; he drives away the women like beasts of burden. Then the white man hates him, and hunts him down like the wild beasts of the forest, and so the red-crayon sketch is rubbed out, and the canvas is ready for a picture of manhood a little more like God's own image.

And so of the other question between the white and black races. We see no apparent solution of it except in the indefinite, we may hope not the perpetual con-

tinuance of the present relation between them. Here, as in the case of the Indians, or any other inferior natural tribe of men, our sympathies will go with our own color first. Far be it from us to palliate any act of injustice that a man of one complexion may be guilty of against a man of a different one. Whatever wrongs we can win the masters away from committing; whatever woes we can alleviate in the weaker people; we should remember and care for. But always in the last appeal it will come to this; if we must choose between the two races, alliance with the superior one, which we may hope to raise to our own level, if it is below it, or with the lower one which we never can, no abstract principle of benevolence can reverse the great family instinct that settles the question for us. The Creator has hung out the colors that form the two rallying points, so that they shall be unmistakable, eternal; nay, there is hardly a single sense that does not bear witness to the ineffaceable distinction of blood, only prevented from producing open opposition by the unchallenged supremacy of the higher of the two races. The white man must be the master in effect, whatever he is in name; and the only way to make him do right by the Indian, the African, the Chinese, is to make him better by example and loving counsel.

I say, then, with the freedom which every son of our beloved soil claims at home, and which will not be denied him here, let not New England feed upon her various antagonisms until she is poisoned through and through with the hatred that includes the sinner with the sin. Let her not run off with all the negative virtues into her corner, and live on this poor diet until her blood becomes too thin and pale for a patriotism that embraces all the land to which she belongs, a philanthropy to welcome the exiles from every other, a confi-

dence in truth and reason rather than in statutes. Let her not hold up the pilled wand of continual strife, so that her yet unborn babes shall come into the world, ring-streaked, speckled and spotted with the birth-marks of local or national jealousies that will make them unworthy of the name of American.

While one of her most eloquent orators openly professes that he and those with him would get rid of the Union; while another of her most powerful speakers predicts its speedy downfall, unchallenged by one of the multitude before him; while the great possible catastrophe has come to be spoken of amongst us in flippant and playful language without giving offence; it is not strange that we should remember the solemn words of warning left us by one whose wisdom and virtue an incredulous generation still confesses. One cannot help fancying, at times, that New England is connected, as it were, by an isthmus to the great confederacy. Day and night sturdy hands are at work to dig it away; if they succeed, she, and such other fragments as may cling to her, will stand as an island in the waste of waters. We must fill up the gaps they make, and widen the strip by which we hold to the continent. Sacrificing no right, yielding nothing to menaces or flattery, making new battle-fields, if necessary, wherever the sacred privileges of freemen are invaded, we must yet cultivate that good-will, that spirit of charity and forbearance, without which the name of Union is as sad a jest as the ghastly mockery of Mezentius that coupled the living and the dead together.

And now, children of our dear New England, we whom she still holds in her charmed precincts, commit her memory to your grateful keeping, trusting that neither time nor distance, nor change of fortune, can ever efface her image from your hearts, or render you

indifferent to her welfare. Fifty years have passed since this Association, having in view the union of the sons of New England, to perpetuate the recollections of home, and to extend such kindly charities to its exiled children as any among them might need, had its humble beginnings. It has grown with the growth of the noble city which within this same half century has borrowed so much industry, strength and intelligence, and repaid it with such large returns. New York is ever welcome to the expansive enterprise and youthful vigor of New England's fairest product; the student-crop of her colleges, the thinking and working harvest of her schools and farms; happy if, during the coming half century, she can keep a good share of her spare human capital at interest in the great commercial centre to which you, and those who have gone before you, have owed so much during almost two entire generations. So shall these annual meetings, which send a glow through the hearts of her distant children, and call their names and images fresh and warm into the memories of those whom they have left behind them, be cherished and renewed until they count their returns in centuries as now in years.

Why should we part without naming the password of our New England Eleusinia—the pivot of our local patriotism—the centre where our recollections of the past must ever rally—the eternal "Monument to the forefathers"—the rock hallowed by the feet of the Pilgrims? God grant that it may prove always a true symbol of the character of the men of New England! As every flake that has been splintered from it as a memento carries its elements and character, unchanged wherever it is borne, so let the sons of her soil be true to their origin wherever they may wander; as the rock is not a loose fragment or a rounded boulder, but a

part of the solid core of earth itself, to which it will hold until the planet is rent asunder; running under the soil that hides it, under the mountains that are piled upon it, under the rivers that flow over it, under the craters that have spouted fire above it, and so is one with the heart of the great sphere forever; thus let New England forever hold with heart, and soul, and strength, to the sacred confederacy which looks upon the continent as its destined heritage.

THE PILGRIMS OF PLYMOUTH

O'er the rough billows of the Western sea,
Careers the wind, forever fresh and free;
Fresh as when first "the spirit of the Lord
Moved the waters," and the Almighty word
The firm foundations of their barriers laid,
Saying, "Your proudest waves shall here be stayed,"
And free as, at the moment of its birth,
When it breathed softly on the virgin earth,
And its Creator gave it leave to go
Where'er it chose, and, where it listed, blow,
Spreading its living wings, at will, abroad,
By king's decree, or bishop's ban unawed,
Chained by no Stuart, locked up by no Laud.

With souls, taught freedom by the winds, that swept
Landward, and rocked their cradles as they slept,
Souls, that no more can brook the bigot's chain,
Than can the surges of the mighty main;
Souls, they are not afraid to call their own,
That brave, at once, the mitre and the throne,
But bow, while gathered on the ocean's brim,
To God, in worship, and to none but Him.
Behold the Pilgrim band! Their native isle,
Ruled by a bigot, casts them out as vile;
The State forbids them, by its stern decrees,
To worship God when, where, and *as* they please;

While they, to conscience true, in virtue strong,
Stiff in the right, as others in the wrong,
Resolve, though earthly thrones and temples fall,
That they will worship thus, or not at all.
And though, not now, the Puritan expires
On Tyburn's gallows, or in Smithfield's fires;
Yet fines, pains, penalties there still remain—
The non-conformist's prison and his chain.
Fleeing, with horse and hound upon his track,
His very garments stripped from off his back,
Scoffed by fanatics, and held up to scorn,
By king, by courtier and the nobly born,
He bids adieu, to see their face no more,
And lay his bones upon a foreign shore;
And on the Mayflower's deck the Pilgrims stand,
One faith, one spirit binding all the band,
That soon shall quit, for aye, their native land.

Hark! the same voices, that have swelled the song
Of praise to God, amid the assembled throng,
In solemn temples, or in humble domes,
Around the hearth-stones of their several homes,
Hymning, are heard upon the air to float—
Man's organ tone, and woman's silvery note,
Blending in one; and, as it sinks and swells,
The music mingles, like "those evening bells,"
When in the lines of Erin's bard they swing,
And here we have the parting hymn they sing.

HYMN

Before us, Lord, old Ocean spreads
  His blue and boundless plain,
But, wheresoe'er Thy spirit leads,
  We follow, o'er the main.

From persecution's bolts and bars,
  Sustained by Thee, we turn,
And, guided by the holy stars,
  That nightly o'er us burn,

We go, through faith in Him who trod
  The Galilean sea,
In a drear wilderness, O God,
  In peace to worship Thee.

For us, no proud cathedral there
  Its doors shall open throw,
Yet can we lift our souls in prayer,
  While kneeling on the snow.

We'd rather meet stern Winter's frown,
  Wild beast and savage man,
Than take the mercy of the crown,
  Or bear the church's ban.

Rather than ask the grace of kings,
  Or bow to their decrees,
We'll trust the most unstable things—
  The billow and the breeze.

For, on the billow, in the breeze,
  The Almighty Spirit rides;
And aye controls by His decrees,
  The tempests and the tides.

His hosts,—the winds, the lightning's glare,—
  Encamp around the just;
With us they move,—their guardian care
  Is our defence and trust.

Our sail unfurling to the wings
  Of all the winds that blow,
We leave the land of priests and kings,
  With thee, O God, to go.

The land of priests and kings those Pilgrims leave.
See their frail bark the white-capped billows cleave!
Her westering canvas, and her crowded deck,
With growing distance, dwindle to a speck,

Till, in the setting sun, she's lost to sight,
Pilgrim, sail, streamer,—all absorbed in light!

A thistle seed, some autumn afternoon,
Careering in its gossamer balloon,
You see roll o'er you, on the buoyant air,
To fall, you'll say, perhaps, "the Lord knows where."
That word, my friend, tho' not, I'm sure, what you
Think very reverent, is yet strictly true.
Though, in the blaze of the descending sun,
That seed's lost sight of,—the All-seeing One
Directs the current that buoys up the ball,
Knows whence it came, and sees where it will fall;
Knows, for He's fixed, the place for it to rest,
What gust would lift, what breeze would bear it best;
Knows every drop of water, in the flood,
That wets its wings, and plants it in the mud,
And how much sunshine, and what depth of snow,
Must warm its bed, and make the thistle grow.

Think ye, that seed, careering through the air,
Is more an object of its Maker's care,
Than is that vanishing, that vanished speck,
That air-borne atom, that wave-wafted deck,
That bears within it, o'er an unknown sea,
The seed of States, of nations yet to be?
Tells he the thistle where to strike its root,
And not the Pilgrim where to plant his foot?

No flag of England flapping in the breeze,—
That flag that claims the empire of the seas,—

Floats at his stern; and, carved upon his bow,
No monarch rides and bathes in brine his brow,
With every sea that breaks upon the deck;
No armèd convoy waits upon his beck;
Along his lonely track, though pirates prowl,
No iron sea-dogs at his port-holes growl;
Not even does "star-eyed science" point his way
To Hudson's mouth — the deep and broad armed bay,
Whose ample bosom and whose sunny smile,
Give warmth, wealth, beauty, to Manhattan's isle,—
Isle, where his children, yet to be, shall throng,
To applaud his faith, in eloquence and song.
Yet, though he comes not "as the conqueror comes,"
With braying trumpets and the roll of drums,
Comes not by science guided through the dark,
With guarding fleets around his helpless bark,
Still is there found, on bleak New England's shore,
A haven for him, never known before;
And there the Mayflower, folding up her wings,
Like a tired sea-bird, round her anchor swings.

As the descending sun with glory floods
The eastern waters, and the western woods,
The Pilgrim band, secure from storm or wreck,
Man, woman, child, stand out upon the deck.
What golden sunshine! how much brighter skies
Than they have seen before, now meet their eyes!
None of the mists, that wrap their native isle,
Hang round these shores;—the woods, the waters, smile.
Says Elder Brewster, with a reverent air,
"Come, let's bow in thanksgiving and prayer."
Was there e'er uttered by the lips of man,
A prayer more fervent, since the world began?

It is not ours, with hearts and faith so faint,
To give the language of that Pilgrim Saint:
Our faith, his discipline has never borne:—
Shall we thank God for that, or shall we mourn?
Mourn that we, nourished on the lap of ease,
Have let the spirit of devotion freeze
Upon our lips, even when they move in prayer?
May God forgive us, and yet make us bear
More of such crosses as the Pilgrims bore,
That they might raise an altar on our shore,
If that will fan the flame, that burns so dim
In our cold bosoms, when we worship Him!

The prayer is closed. The Pilgrims all have prayed;
And o'er them evening gently throws her shade.
Cold from the icy shore the night winds blow;
From their chill breath they all retire below,
Save the night watch; but ere they sink to sleep
On the scarce breathing bosom of the deep,
This evening hymn, with voices soft, but clear,
They pour into their heavenly Guardian's ear:—

HYMN

The winds, O God, thy voice obey,
  The raging seas thy will:
For both are hushed, when Thou dost say,
  "Ye tempests, Peace! Be still!"

Thy hand our feeble bark upheld,
  When tossed upon the wave,
Else had we, when the billows swelled,
  Found, in their depths, a grave.

We've seen Thy smile on yonder woods,
And in this evening sky,
And 'mid these awful solitudes,
We're safe beneath Thine eye.

Night, o'er us, spreads her starry wings,
And shall her vigil keep,
While, after all our wanderings,
In peace Thy servants sleep.

All the long hours, while Darkness holds her throne,
The sturdy Standish walks the deck alone,
To guard that cradle of a Commonwealth,
From foes, advancing, or by force of stealth;
While thoughts like these, though not in words expressed,
Steal o'er his soul, and move his manly breast.

"Beneath my feet far richer treasures lie,
Than floated erst in Jason's argosy;
Ay, to the waiting world, a greater boon,
Than e'er was borne by a three-decked galleon:
The golden fleece!—the silver of Peru!
What are *they*, weighed against pure souls and true?
Those might spread for me here a bed of down,
Or glitter in an earthly monarch's crown;
But these shall be remembered, when the Lord
Makes up his jewels.—Is not that his word?
And by the Savior's hand shall each be set,
To shine forever in his coronet:
Nay, each bright spirit, like an orient gem,
Shall sparkle in his Father's diadem.
For, here, firm faith, unsullied honor rest,
Woman's true heart, and beauty's spotless breast;
In all, the spirit to endure and dare;
All men of valor, and all men of prayer,—

Men, full of grace, faith, charity and hope,
Who want no bishop, and will have no pope;
Who want, of course, no bishop's underlings;
Who're their own priest,—ay, their own priests and
kings;
Men, who're resolved, whatever else they be,
That they, in soul and body, will be free:—
Who ne'er have learned, and ne'er will learn, to cower,
Either to royal or to priestly power;
Men, whom the Lord, and not the king, made great,
And who, themselves, are both a church and state.
While o'er such spirits I keep watch and ward,
I seem to see an angel of the Lord,
In radiant garments, standing at the bow,
With a soft glory beaming from his brow,
And hear him say, in solemn tones and sweet,—
An embryo empire sleeps beneath thy feet."

Standish, it *was* a spirit from on high,
That, to thy spirit, spake that prophecy.
While watch and ward thy valiant spirit kept,
Beneath thy feet an embryo empire slept.

'Tis morning; a dull, cold December day,
From cheerless skies, comes down upon the bay,
Revealing, in its leaden-colored light,
Bare rocks and leafless forests to the sight.
No craggy barriers, beetling o'er the strand,
Frowning them off, before the Pilgrims stand;
But sandy slopes, with granite boulders strown,
Some open fields where Indian corn had grown,
Hill-sides that wait the culture of the vine,
Should summer ever on those hill-sides shine,
But wooded now, with walnut, oak and pine,

And a bold height, that overlooks the plain,
And seaward guards the harbor and the main,
Compose the panorama of the ground,
Chosen by God, and by the Pilgrims found,
Where, amid rocks and sand and ice and snow,
The seeds of faith and liberty shall grow;
Seeds, that have floated on the winds and waves,
From the Old World, from the dead martyrs' graves,
Now to be planted, by an exiled few,
On this cold, barren border of the New.

Ask me not, friends, to hold up, in my rhyme,
To your admiring gaze, that most sublime,
That most affecting picture, ever painted
By merely human hands, however sainted,
Of a high purpose, ne'er to bend the knee
To man or God, but in full liberty,
Which the stern Pilgrim fathers of our land,
And Pilgrim mothers, working hand in hand,
Spread on the canvas, on that wintery day,
When, from the Mayflower, anchored in the bay,
The Elder, Brewster, issuing with his flock,
Knelt down, and worshipped God on Plymouth Rock.

The subject, and man's power, for once regard:—
Historian, artist, orator and bard,
Each by the theme inspired, with lofty aim,
Spurred on by genius and the hope of fame,
With pen, brush, burin, all the charms of style,
And with full knowledge of the facts, the while,
And with a courage that has never quailed,
Have tried to DO that landing;—all have failed.

Ask ye the *why?* One word explains the whole,
The greatness of the theme was in the soul—

The soul of those who brought the deed about—
And, but in *action*, can not be brought out.
Brace but our souls up to the pitch of theirs,
Their faith in God, the fervor of their prayers,
The feeling, nay, the knowledge, that in prayer
There is a power, that is no other where;
Their trust in Truth, that, in the Almighty's sight,
He is almighty, who is *in the right;*
The feeling that we're bound by God's command,
That none can take us out of *His* strong hand;
That we are *His*, whether we will or no;
That we can never true allegiance owe
To any earthly power, whate'er it is,
Whose statutes or commands conflict with *His;*—
Their fixed resolve that, to an earthly throne,
They would submit, but on these terms alone,
That it should ne'er require them to withdraw
Their faith and fealty from the higher law,
Given them by God;—since none of this world's great,
No legislator, prince, or potentate,
No dignitary, in the Church or State,
Let me obey his mandates e'er so well,
Will e'er consent to take my place in hell,
Or bear the least of all my penalties,
For breaking God's commands, in keeping *his;*—
String but our souls, as did the Pilgrims theirs,
To this high pitch, and, in the world's affairs,
We may act such a part that, they who claim
A kindred with us, and who bear our name,
May glory in the name that they inherit,
And pride themselves in *their* forefathers' spirit;
May say, "Those men of eighteen fifty-five,
Had souls within them, that were all alive;"
Stamp, on their children's memories, the date
Of some great deed that made their fathers great;

Call on their orators and bards to give
Our names a place, with names ordained to live;
Talk of those fathers,—say, "Those were the men,
That the world stood in need of, there and then;"
Say, "Though they knew no bishop, and no throne,
They knew the *right*, and though they went alone,
They went where *went* the right, through fire and frost
Made no concessions, counted not the cost
Of noble enterprise, and great endeavor:—
Self-sacrifice for truth—they shunned it *never:*
In short, those men were worthy of the stock
They sprung from—that great hearted Pilgrim flock,
That landed long ago, on Plymouth Rock."

But, can the deeds of those old men be painted?
No! By his own *deeds*, every saint is sainted.
Once done, the deed escapes from the control
Of pen or paint, and lives within the soul;—
The soul of one who feels a kindred flame,
And asks of Time none but a lasting fame;
Of one who, standing where the Pilgrims stood,
And knowing that his veins hold Pilgrim blood,
Knows he can feel, too, as the Pilgrims felt,
Kneel in the spirit that old Brewster knelt;
For freedom dare, somewhat as Standish dared;
Care, for the Commonwealth, as Carver cared;
Bear with a patient spirit, as they bore,
Perils at sea, and perils on the shore;
Aspire to serve the Lord as they aspired;
With all the Pilgrims' fiery zeal be fired;
Meet on a wild and barren shore, the gaunt
And hungry wolf,—inexorable Want—
To find the ark of God a resting place,
Look Indians, frost, and famine in the face;

Resign the loved ones nearest to his side,
Give to the grave, as Standish gave, his bride,
And die, as fifty of their hundred died.

Such be *our* souls, and we may well discard
The labors of the artist and the bard:
It is, indeed, an enviable thing
In deathless strains of deathless deeds to sing,
But far more so, according to my creed,
To have a soul like his, who did the deed.
A *painted* hero!—it is well to see one;
A *real* hero!—better, far, to *be* one.

We said—"Resign the loved ones at his side,
Give to the grave, as Standish gave, his bride,"
And, we have said—"While Darkness held her throne,
The sturdy Standish walked the deck alone";—
Here let us add—while others found repose,
Under his watchful eye, his lovely Rose,
Bound to his heart by cords that ne'er decay,
Beneath that deck, sleepless and fading lay;
One little month,—and on that icy shore,
Death's cold hand touched her, and she bloomed no more!

Late had she bowed over her father's grave;
Still later, with her husband, crossed the wave;
Given herself to him, in her beauty's pride,
Bloomed on his bosom,—faded there,—and died.

Her grave is ready,—In the bitter air
All things are frozen,—but the funeral prayer.
While all, without, is bound in icy chains,
Her famished sisters, round her cold remains,

With stricken hearts, their only offering,
Come, and in sorrow's tones, this requiem sing:—

REQUIEM

Dear sister, thou hast paid the debt, that all of us must pay;
The beauty of thy blooming cheek, soon hath it passed away;
Thy sun, that rose so beautiful, is early clouded in,
And thou hast left us, in a world of sorrow and of sin.

Dear sister, thou hast meekly borne the sufferings of thy lot;
If thou hast ever breathed a murmur, we have heard it not;
But we have heard thy prayer, that God would make thy husband strong,
To bear the burden, that his heart would have to bear ere long.

Dear sister, we shall mourn our loss; but this shall soothe our pain,
That, though thy death's a loss to us, to thee it is a gain;
For, now this desert thou hast left, and passed the Jordan o'er,
"Sweet fields" await thy weary feet, on Canaan's blissful shore.

Thy spirit, dear, was borne away by Pestilence and Dearth;
And now thy body must be laid beneath the frozen earth;
Thy brethren to its rest must bear it, through the biting blast;
And well we know, of all they bear, thine will not be the last.

But oh, how great a thing it is, like thee, to pass away!
Like thee to be prepared for death and for the judgment day!
Through "the dark valley" when we pass, though each must go alone,
It is our faith, that we shall meet, before the Judge's throne.

Look at those women, on that dreary shore!
You know what they could bear, by what they bore.
O, with what faith and love they met their lot!
What should a woman be, that they were not?
Rendering, in every sphere, the tribute due,
All true to God, all to their husbands true.
For these had they resigned home, country, ease,
Encountered all the perils of the seas;
The rocks and breakers on a leeward shore,
Had braved,—the tempest's and the surge's roar,
And the wild beasts, that through the forest prowl,
The bear's marauding, and the gaunt wolf's howl,
The stealthy savage, aiming at their life
The arrow, tomahawk or scalping knife;—
Add to all this—what never has been told—
The driving snow storms, and the bitter cold
Of a New England winter! Think how, then,
These Pilgrim women met all this, like men!
Nay, when their cheeks were wan for want of bread,
How these same women made the sick man's bed,
Spoke to him words of Hope, when blank Despair
Was shutting out what little light was there,—
Cheered up the sinking spirits of the man,
And soothed his pains as none but woman can;
And tell me,—shall those Pilgrim women not
Be aye remembered?—Can they be forgot?
Were they not helps meet for those Pilgrim men?
Oh, yes! "When shall we look upon their like again?"

Their like again? Whene'er occasion calls!
In Labor's cottage, or in Pleasure's halls,
Whether she's dancing in the gay saloon,
Or walking with you by the silver moon,
Or leading forth the steps of tottering age,
Or standing, thoughtful, by the maniac's cage,
Watching a sister on her dying bed,
Or dressing her for burial when she's dead,
Has she not met the occasion? Has she quailed
At any toil or peril that assailed?
When has a daughter of those mothers failed?

Let not Oblivion, then, those women shroud;
Or, round them, draw her curtain or her cloud.
'Tis well our Pilgrim fathers to revere;
But let us hold our Pilgrim mothers dear;
For, but for them, which, of us, had been here?

The vision of those stars, that, in the dawn
Of Freedom's day arose, is now withdrawn.
Those morning stars, those heralds of the day,
That o'er our land now pours its golden ray,
Are seen no more.—But what a glory burns,
And shall forever, round their holy urns!
How dim the strongest light, that ever shone
Round men who "wade through slaughter to a throne,"
Compared with what shall glorify their graves,
So long as Ocean towards them rolls his waves!
So long as, looking o'er the stormy bay,
Their narrow house is sprinkled with its spray!

"Their narrow house!" What monumental pile
Towers o'er their dust, and marks, for many a mile,
Their resting place? What simple head-stone shows
The stranger, where their mouldering bones repose?

"None," must we say? Is not their place of rest
Worth being noted,—consecrated—blest?
O'er their neglected graves sea breezes pass;—
We hear them sighing through the tall, dead grass;—
Say—in that sighing, does the thoughtful ear
No tone reproachful from those sleepers hear?

When one has led of Freedom's host the van,[1]
Or fallen, a martyr in the cause of man,
The heart hath never willingly forgot
The holy day, the consecrated spot,
Marked by an act of valor or of faith,
Or by a noble deed, or noble death.

Thus Joshua, standing on the Desert's edge,
When of his people he had taken a pledge,
That from Jehovah they would never swerve,
But that *Him* only they would love and serve,
Set up a stone, and said, "Consider, now,
This stone hath heard the covenant and vow
That ye have made to God; and it shall bear
Witness against you, should it ever hear,
Amid these solemn groves, these arches dim,
Your vows go up to any God but Him."

By those who sail, as I have done, with joy,
Along the shore where once stood ancient Troy,
Two grassy mounds upon the right are seen:—
Once, the Scamander may have flowed between.
Those mounds, by Homer seen, still standing there,
The names of Ajax and Patroclus bear.

[1] Some forty or fifty of the following lines are taken, with some alterations, from the poem that I delivered at Acton, Mass., on the occasion of consecrating the monument, erected there over the remains of those who fell at Concord, in the first battle in the war of American Independence.—J. P.

Thousands of years o'er those green mounds have
rolled;
A million mornings touched their tops with gold;
A million nights their dewy tears shall shed
On those memorials of the honored dead.

On a low shelving rock, that breaks the waves,
That roll in from the East, when Eurus raves,
And gives smooth water, on the windward side,
To ships, that in the port of Athens ride,
There stands a marble structure. Seen from this,
The island and the gulf of Salamis
Lie just before you. Off, upon your left,
The Persian keels, the blue Ægean cleft:
And there the Persian's fleet was swept away:
And, in remembrance of that glorious day,
There stands, and looks out on the Grecian seas,
And there shall stand, thy tomb, Themistocles!

On many a spot of our own native land,
Sacred to valor and to freedom, stand
The granite obelisk, the marble pile,
Hailed by the patriot heart, for many a mile,
As upright witnesses, who lift their head,
To tell the world where sleep the honored dead.

Prophetic whispers steal upon my ear,
And seem to say, that not another year,
Shall the calm moon and ever watchful stars
Drive, o'er the Pilgrims' graves, their viewless cars,
And see those graves neglected. They have seen,
Too many years, the tall, thin grass wave green,
And the dew sparkle, like a brilliant gem,
And hoar-frost lay its white sheet over them,

And heard the night winds, and chill autumn's gale
O'er them pour forth their melancholy wail,
And Winter, with his mantle o'er them spread,
Howl his long, stormy *requiem* o'er the dead.

No longer be it thus! But o'er the grave,
Where sleep the true, the holy and the brave,
Let monumental stones their vigils keep,
To tell the world the names of those who sleep
Within their shadow, and to hold in trust
The sacred treasure of their garnered dust.

And who may ask their children that the spot,
Where they repose, be marked, if *they* may not?
Who build the strongest bulwarks of the State?
Who is the greatest one amongst the great?
Not he who o'er the field triumphant treads,
Or builds up pyramids of human heads;—
Your Cæsar, pointing his prætorian swords,
Your Tamerlane, heading his Tartar hordes,
But he who dares, in kings' and bigots' spite,
Stand, and do bloodless battle for the *right;*
By blessing, binds his people to his throne,
And chains *their* wills, by having chained his own,
To the high will of HIM, who curbs the spheres,
And makes them mark his own eternal years:—
And, as *His* greatest glory ever springs,
Not from the fact that He is King of kings,
But that the greatest good, from all his plans,
Results for aye,—so does the greatest man's.

See the results, then, of those Pilgrims' cares,
Toils, perils, sufferings, sacrifices, prayers,
And offerings, laid where, first, in fear they trod,
Upon the altar of their faith in God.

And, that herein we may not judge amiss,
Compare the Pilgrims' landing day with this.
Dense forests, with their axes, cleared away,
Their dark recesses opened to the day,
And, in their stead, is Amalthea's horn
Filled and o'errunning with the golden corn.
Then, in a single port, a single sail
Stood, stiff with ice; now, not a seaward gale
Blows from our harbors, for a thousand miles,
But bears our bounty to the distant isles;
Nor one blows landward, but, behold it brings
The wealth of nations on its burdened wings;
Nations, whose sons are bleeding, or have bled,
In battle, and now look to us for bread.
For lo! our harvests, and our thousand mills,
Our sheep, our cattle, from our thousand hills,
Feed now the hosts that Western Europe pours,
In clouds and thunder, on the Euxine's shores.

In one square house, twenty by twenty feet,
With a thatched roof, to shield from snow and sleet,—
A roof, that, one cold January day,
While Carver, Bradford, sick beneath it lay,
Fired by a spark, entirely burnt away,—
In that square house, their bed-room, chapel, hall,
The which their "great new *rendezvous*" they call,
The Pilgrim Fathers their first Sabbath kept;
There they all worshipped God, there ate, there slept.

Now, from a myriad mansions, large and fair,
With the first smoke that curls into the air,
Rises the incense of domestic prayer,
Where'er the hill-sides slope, the rivers run,
From the Penobscot to the Oregon:

While Gothic temples, with their marble spires,
Reared by the children of those Pilgrim sires,
In splendid cities, see the serious throng,
Like a deep river calmly flow along,
And pour into their gates, with prayer and choral song.

Where the poor Pilgrim heard the Indian's yell,
The school-house stands, and children learn to spell;
Or the steam-whistle tells of coming cars,
Or science sits and counts and weighs the stars.
Where, *then*, adorned with feathers and tattoo,
The Indian paddled his birch-bark canoe;
Now, without sails, a gorgeous palace rides,
By no winds wafted, turning with no tides,
But bearing bravely on its precious freight—
The brave, the wise, the beautiful, the great—
The strongest streams, the broadest oceans o'er,
Landing them safe, upon the farthest shore.
Where, in a wigwam *then*, the Pilgrim saw
A lazy Indian and his laboring squaw,
Living 'mid smoke and smut, and steam and stench,
Without a chair, a bedstead or a bench,
There, *now* (in silence passing princely domes,)
Are seen ten thousand hospitable homes,
Where pure domestic love and peace are found,
Leaning on Labor's arm, while, all around,
Health, strength and beauty, and true faith abound:
While, over all,—no vain, no useless thing—
Spreads pure Religion her protecting wing,
And bids the dweller of those happy homes,
Whene'er he rests there, or whene'er he roams,
Not to forget, that from his native stock,
All this has come;—even from the little flock,
That stood up, stark and stern, and prayed on Plymouth Rock.

But the same spirit—the same moral nerve—
That earned this greatness, can alone preserve.

Sons of the Pilgrims! need ye to be told,
It takes "perpetual shoulders" to uphold
"The exceeding weight of glory," that is theirs,
And prove your title, as your fathers' heirs?

Will ye, while bending reverent o'er their graves,
Become the vassals of slave-hunting knaves?
Grow slaves yourselves, by making others slaves?
Rivet the broken chain, and ply the rod,
That galls and cuts the children of the God,
Your Pilgrim fathers worshipped and obeyed,
Because so bidden by laws that *men* have made?

Children of the Pilgrim flock,
Offshoots of the Pilgrim stock,
Planted, erst, on Plymouth Rock,
By the surging main;
When upon that shore they dwelt,
When upon that rock they knelt,
Would those men have *lived*, and felt
Slavery's galling chain?

When they all were kneeling there,
And the incense of their prayer
Rose upon the frosty air—
From a wigwam's shade,
Had they heard the savage call,
"Hunt ye down that fleeing thrall!
Seize, and hold him, one and all!"
Would they have obeyed?

Had they done it, would they dare
Kneel again, and breathe a prayer
To the God they worshipped there?—
Had they prayed, would *He*,
Who their steps had thither led,
Who his guardian wing had spread
Over their defenceless head,
On the wintery sea,

His all-gracious ear have bowed?
Had they called on HIM aloud,
Would the column and the cloud,
Once to Israel given,
Have descended, as their guide,
Through those forests, dark and wide,
When to Thee, O God, they cried,
And were heard of Heaven?

Hark! that savage call *we* hear!
Now, 'tis ringing in our ear!
See, the panting thrall is *near!*
Shall *we* play the hound?
Shall *we* join the unleashed pack,
Yelping on a brother's track?
Shall we seize and drag him back
Fainting, bleeding, bound?

Ay!—when we're in love with chains;
Ay!—when in our bastard veins,
No drop of the blood remains
Of those Pilgrim men!
Ay,—when our own backs we strip,
That what blood we have may drip,
For the lordlings of the whip,—
Then,—and not till then!

O, Thou Holy One and Just,
Thou, who wast the Pilgrims' trust,
Thou, who watchest o'er their dust
By the moaning sea;
By their conflicts, toils and cares,
By their perils and their prayers,
By their ashes,—make their heirs
True to them and Thee.

THE PURITAN SCHEME OF NATIONAL GROWTH

RICHARD SALTER STORRS

1857

RICHARD SALTER STORRS

(1821-1900.)

THE last of these literary celebrations was held in 1857, when Dr. R. S. Storrs, then a young pastor in Brooklyn, made the address. Dr. Storrs was a native of Braintree, Massachusetts. He was graduated at Amherst, and entered the office of the Hon. Rufus Choate. He soon decided, however, to follow the profession of his father and grandfather, preparing for the ministry at Andover.

Dr. Storrs's volume "The Constitution of the Human Soul" had been published in 1857. He was already prominent, but his presence was yet to make the Church of the Pilgrims noted throughout the land. There he served, with increasing honor, through a devoted pastorate, the fiftieth anniversary of which raised the entire city to a stupendous burst of enthusiasm. As successor of Dr. Mark Hopkins in the presidency of the American Board of Foreign Missions, he made some of his greatest occasional addresses. He was famous far beyond the limits of his region and his denomination, as a master of English, a deep student, a man of strong and broad thought, and a fearless leader.

ORATION

Mr. President, Ladies, and Gentlemen of the New England Society:

WE have met to-night for an office of commemoration, and of filial piety. We have met as representatives of that portion of our country from whose loins we have sprung, whose influences we venerate, to whose traditions we confess our allegiance, and to whose freshly remembered homes our hearts untravelled still return, from the midst of all newer attractions and delights. Without even the cold that comes out of the north to remind us of the emigrants who faced it first on the coasts of Plymouth, and with all things else that meet or surround us set in singular contrast with the scenes they confronted,—these long and echoing streets of trade, these wharves which are fringed with the shipping of a continent, these avenues lined with luxurious homes, the halls of justice, the many churches, the great institutes of learning, of charity, and of pleasure, this audience itself, and the room we are gathered in, all conspiring to show the advance we have realized, and reminding us only by the law of antithesis of the sheeted and desolate hills which they saw as they drew to the end of their perilous voyage,—so we come, to lay our fresh garland on the graves of the Departed, and with praising hearts, to recount the indebtedness we acknowledge to them!

It is an office which many may covet, but which none should condemn; which the intimate instincts of nature seem to prompt; and which every descendant from an ancestry deemed by him noble and pure should emulate and applaud. Surely, if even the ancient world has honored the memory of the great ones departed with festival and procession; if its finest poetry has celebrated them, in lyric grace, in elegiac pathos, and in the long-resounding measures of epic verse; if its noblest art has been dedicated to them, in pictorial portraiture, in statues, and in tombs; if its very legislation has been full of their influence, as its history of their deeds; and if, in all the great crises of its progress, in the forum, on the battle-field, on decks that reeled swimming in blood, as the very palpable scales of Destiny,—if here the influence of the earlier heroes, that had brooded invisibly over all peaceful years, has seemed to rush forth conspicuous and embodied, till inaudible battalions were felt sweeping the field, and a dusky legion hovered everywhere on the air,—surely, it may be pardoned to us, in these ages and lands which Christ hath taught, that we recall the great character of our Ancestors, and offer to them our humbler praise!

And yet we are here not only as vividly mindful of a Past, but as conscious of a Present, and hopeful for a Future. We are here as not divorced in any degree from the nation we are part of, although the province which gave us birth claims our prime love. And I trust, and doubt not, that we all of us are here, as aware that the grandest, the only really worthy and permanent tribute we can offer to our ancestors, is the life we accomplish, the work we do, to promote the ends which were sacred to them. "Man celebrates," says Richter, "to his beloved ones a more beautiful festival when he dries the tears of others than when he only sheds his

own; and the most beautiful flower and cypress-garland which we can hang upon loved monuments is a fruit-garland of good deeds." And what is thus true of the personal representative of a parent deceased must much more be true of a succeeding generation; whose force has been derived to them, their culture accomplished, and their character shaped, for great public purposes, and to whom these appeal with a supreme voice.

That people which is smit with such idolatry of the Past that it pauses before this in passive admiration, and renders it the cheap tribute of verbal adulation, while hindered from attempting fresh works for itself, only brings upon itself a keener contempt for the contrast it offers with its own Heroic Age. Inspiration is not chartered to names or blood. It flies, air-pinioned, over the earth; and seeks its home, and its place of enthronement, in every congenial human soul. And so they are the real representatives of our Fathers—we are such only if accomplishing this—who interfuse their fire and force, their dignity, patience, and forecast of faith, into modern endeavors, and who execute a work, on the present arena, completive of that which they wrought nobly two centuries ago! Where they contributed to found a nation, and to organize its elements, we are called to contribute to advance and upbuild it. The seeds were theirs, to implant and protect. The already rooted trunk is ours, to cherish and defend. Within narrow boundaries lay the area for their work. To the shores of the Pacific, to the wealthy slopes of the far South-West, extend our realms. But our work shall only represent theirs, and be its meet and great memorial, when we do it with the same self-denial and energy, the same wisdom, fidelity, and inflexible courage, which they showed first; when we show ourselves

their successors by a spiritual lineage, better than the physical, through hearts baptized with the qualities of their character, and minds informed with the wisdom of their plans.

And we are here to take note of this fact, and to gird ourselves afresh for the effort which it claims. Not merely to honor the Past by our praises, but to quicken ourselves to emulate that Past, by a kindred heroism in a similar work—that is our errand; the only one which could justify our assemblage; the only one we can any of us accept!

I propose then to ask you to consider for a little THE PURITAN SCHEME OF NATIONAL GROWTH; that which they whom we honor were accustomed to recognize, and which they strove to realize and incorporate in their own institutions. By considering this, we may animate ourselves, perhaps, in attempting our own great office in the world, and may at the same time, from a higher point of view, examine and estimate the work of our Fathers. The theme opens widely and brightly before us. It runs not only back in its relations, but forward also, over that Future beneath whose lifting shadows we are met. It is the theme, I cannot but think, which they whom we celebrate would themselves have suggested. With perfect fitness to the place and the occasion, it challenges our thoughts.

It was one of the cardinal principles of our Fathers concerning National Growth, that this should proceed from, and be animated by, A DEFINITE AND POSITIVE SPIRITUAL LIFE, diffused through the State; interpenetrating all parts of it; and manifesting its influence more or less distinctly in all public and private activities.—Whether consciously or not, this idea always wrought in them. It is seen not only in sermons and in journals, but in parts of their statutes.

It moulded and quickened their whole frame of government.

With all their scrupulous deference to the forms which they had established, and to which they required strict submission in others, such forms were only important to them as incorporating and manifesting this spirit of life which they sought to make paramount, and as tending to distribute and to quicken this in others. The undeniable fact, too, of their judicial intolerance—which was often combined, in singular vividness, with their personal kindness toward those who dissented from the religion of the State and its dominant ideas, toward Romanists, Prelatists, Baptists, and Friends—this intolerance sprang directly from the fact that they conceived the SPIRIT of the State to be more important than numbers or wealth, or the friendship of neighbors; and they would not allow this, if legislation could prevent it, to be impaired by hostile influence.

Undoubtedly, they committed an error, and a grave one, in applying their principle. They exercised an authority which in others they had denounced; and as a mere matter of prudence they erred. For a doctrine, whether correct or erroneous, is always too elastic, and too self-diffusive, to be trodden down by power. It springs back, with only a mightier rebound, from beneath every blow, and appeals to wider sympathies the more it is oppressed. So all the doctrines which the Puritans opposed only gained wider prevalence through the force which they used in resisting their spread; while, by their public using of this, they brought a dark shadow over their fame.

But while we recognize without flinching the fact that they erred, let us recognize also as clearly the fact that it was not from pride, from passion, or from malice. It was in the excess of a high and pure impulse. It

was through pushing to a doubtful, and at last an injurious conclusion, a principle that was right, philosophical, noble, and when held in due limits, most fruitful of good. A State compacted, from its infancy onward, by a pure and permeating spiritual life; into which should enter a deep love of Freedom, combining with reverence and conscientious regard for the public order, with both these impregnated by religious convictions, and culminating naturally in the fervors of piety; a State which should be coextensive with the Church, and should carry that out, in its natural expansion, whithersoever it went;—this was the State at which the Puritans aimed. In enthusiasm for this, they had crossed the sea, and attempted the establishment of a nation dissevered from all traditions; a nation as recent on the face of the earth as the hemlock-tents that sheltered its founders;—an enterprise of singular height and reach, and which looked as hazardous to the men of that day as the project of Columbus to the sailors who followed him, when they thought themselves in danger of sailing westward over the actual rim of the world. They were not afraid of the bleakest coasts. They were not affrighted by the icy wastes which met them at Plymouth, or the desolate shores which opened at Salem. They accepted, without hesitation or diffidence, the rugged hills of New England for their home, instead of the more inviting latitudes for which they had sailed; and through every discouragement they were inwardly expectant and assured of success, if only they might ensure the prevalence, from the outset onward, of this high and inspiring spiritual force, of Religious conviction and a conscientious Probity, throughout their communities.

Their sumptuary laws, regulating dress, furniture, and food; their rules requiring the support of one min-

istry by the people of a town; their absolute refusal to establish hereditary prerogatives in the State, or to found authority upon any thing but character, even when they were tempted most strongly to do this; their vigilant supervision and censorship of literature, which doomed an immoral book to the flames, no matter how costly, or to whom it belonged, as certainly as if its pages had been thick with the virus of plague; their great, heroic, wise endeavors to found a Christian University at Cambridge, and afterward at New Haven—ALL had in this supreme idea their point of final resolution and union. They are to be interpreted and measured by this. And in this the Puritans were in evident harmony with the great laws of History, and with the essential and organific principles which govern the constitution of Society on earth. They showed themselves philosophers, and spiritual thinkers, and not mere men of motion and of action; worthy to have sprung from the age of Elizabeth; worthy to have been trained by Providence for its work!

Life, everywhere, is the element of Growth; and a vigorous and governing spiritual life, diffused through the State, *is* better to it, a thousand times over, than any material helps and resources. How brightly history instructs us in this; while also it is so early reached, and so clearly established, by the logic of analysis! The principles of Truth, of Justice, and of Liberty, they receive recognition from God's supreme mind. They are essentially and forever involved in the very conception of a co-operative system of intelligent beings. The soul of man, if it does not delight to express them itself, yet recognizes their glory and affirms their authority, and demands that they be expressed toward it by others. It never will rest, in inward tranquillity, until they are; and whensoever they really enter a man or a

community, and are accepted, loved and realized, their force is always renewing and inspiring. They train, and develop, and invigorate to new action, our noblest powers. Heroisms are born of them; self-sacrifice; endurance; and even the triumphs of genius itself. Literatures spring from them; humanities; chivalries; and that best Art, which is not a fabricated ornament for the State, but a product of its force, consubstantial with its strength. They erect each soul to a nobler stature, and give it new dignity, manliness, might. And they make a PEOPLE centrally fearless, spiritually effective; enduing them with intellectual strength and resources, uniting them in the compact of a living agreement, and shooting into them a force of enterprise and of patience, not from any aggregation of numbers and wealth, but from their own interior assurance of what is *Right*, of what must conquer!

Often, and signally, has the influence of these been illustrated in History, by individuals and by peoples. The Spartan strength, which sprang from simplicity and sobriety of tastes, from a sense of the value and beauty of Liberty, and from a devotion to the rugged Peloponnesus as its natural home; the Roman might, which, more than by any other fact or force, was built up and consolidated by the prime and clear recognition on the Tiber of the twin ideas of Liberty and Justice, as the right of the citizen, and which, with all the treasures it had gathered, and the conquests it had made, went down irretrievably into crashing destruction, when these were sacrificed; in times more recent, the long-continued independence of Switzerland, that high-nested Eagle, watching Europe from her eyrie; the growth, and greatness, and power in the world, of England and its government;—how all illustrate the same fixed law, which is according to God's nature

and to ours, and which constitutes the essential philosophy of History, that the vigorous spiritual force of a people is the prime condition, the organizing power, the architectonic law and life, of its enduring and grand prosperity! Whatever shuts off a people from the world, so that this may remain in them; as the isthmus that shut off Sparta from Europe, or the mountains that circle Switzerland with their bulwarks, and make it peculiar and separate among kingdoms, or the seas that intervene between England and the Continent, and secure to that island its special development; this becomes to such a people the most constant and helpful auxiliary to their strength. And whatever expands an empire so fast, as exploration and conquest expanded the Roman, that this individualized spirit of life loses activity or loses supremacy, and comes to be either overwhelmed or exhaled amid physical successes—that is certainly fatal to the real prosperity and permanence of the State. It buries it, like Tarpeia, beneath the golden trophies piled on it. It leaves it, like the relics of Charles Borromeo, simply a crowned and robed cadaver, for dissolution to destroy, or any onset of force to tear apart.

The Puritans were right then, certainly, manifestly right and wise, in seeking to make an inward life the centre of their State, the element and energizing principle of its growth; which should wind itself into, and show itself amid, all subsequent development, and work unseen to mould and build the ultimate Power. If that life was not the rarest and noblest that we can conceive, it was certainly better than any that had preceded it. It had more of majesty, purity, truth, in it; more of God's inspirations, and of God's present influence. The devotion they cherished to personal liberty, to public justice, and to the great principles and laws of Religion,

expressed in a rude, but still a real way, the grandest power our nature can hold; the power that must invigorate and protect more than arts or diplomacies, or any memories of the past. They were right in not fearing or caring what opposed them: the coldest climate, the most rough and rocky and inhospitable coast, a country with neither spontaneous crops nor wealthy mines, a wooded wilderness, haunted by savages: if only they might eternize this life which they brought hither, and make it supreme from the outset to the end. For this principle of their power, although imponderable, was also immortal; though invisible as the fruitful energy of the Spring, it was like that subtle, penetrant, irreversible, and sure to show itself in a subsequent fruitage of beauty and of wealth!

And this marked them preëminent among the men of their age; the real builders of States; the real architects of Empire! Unconsciously, perhaps, they had struck here the vein whose quarried gold was to build and adorn the great fabrics of State throughout the future. With the quick intuition which experience had taught, they had seized the true secret of imperial development. And they were alone in this. When Spain sent out her colonies to the South, it was with great fleets and disciplined captains; but with no other governing aim or plan than to gather wealth as rapidly as possible; to pluck the rubies, the sapphires, and the gold which flashed on that narrow and splendid zone, and then to sweep back with these unreckoned argosies, and set them shining on the robes of the Peninsula. When Raleigh and his contemporaries essayed to found a new empire in Virginia, it was their scheme to transport thither the society, the industry, the chivalry of the Old World, and by these to organize the new commonwealths. The plan contemplated no peculiar develop-

ment; no growth of the State from invisible principles; no dominance of supreme and subordinating Ideas throughout its extent; and it failed, accordingly. The distance was too great, and the country too novel, to sustain such an enterprise. But when the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth,—when afterward the freemen of the Massachusetts Colony were established at Boston, and its hilly vicinity,—they threw themselves back, behind all human helps and strength, on that invisible spiritual power which had wrought in themselves, and which they meant should work and reign in those who came after. They designed the State which they set up, to be firmly established in the souls of its members, and then to be realized in outward form wherever these carried it. They meant the material to be builded and shaped by the law of the spirit; a moral force, incompressible, though invisible, to be the germ of the whole commonwealth.

And herein, as I said, they contrasted the others, and showed themselves nobler; of higher stature, larger reach, a finer intuition into man's mystic nature, a more grand and inspiring confidence in God. We can pardon much to them; their severity of manners, their hostility to the fine arts which they thought enervating, their disposition to reënact on the shores of the New World the Mosaic legislation, in many of its forms, as in all of its principles; we can understand what it was that sustained them, amid every privation, and made them expectant of a glorious Future, while near and dark still lowered their horizon; we feel the same sympathies grappling us to them which knit the hearts of Bradford and Winslow, of Winthrop and Saltonstall, and their educated contemporaries, so closely to their work; we interpret, in a word, their whole great enterprise, and see its relations, and are already prophetic of

its issue; the moment we bring the fact before us, that they sought to organize a nation by a spirit, and to govern it by principles, and not merely to pile it by physical aggregation, and compact it by the rules of a reciprocal interest. It made no difference whence they sailed, whether from Plymouth or Delft Haven; it made no difference how they came, whether in poverty or in wealth; since they were the heralds of these powers invisible. These sent them out to traverse the seas, and these were to be to them arms and law. And they could not relinquish the work once commenced. The great maxim of Hampden, "*nulla vestigia retrorsum*," became their maxim also, by a law of necessity; for they *could* not go back, so long as this inspiring purpose, which had drawn their barks across the ocean, which wore on its front illustrious promises, which was in itself to them as an evangel, commanded them FORWARD!

It was rather a natural result of this, and a necessary corollary, than an element added to it, their Second principle: that a State should be CLOSELY AND THOROUGHLY ORGANIZED, in its physical frame; and that it should GROW WITH STEADY, SHAPELY, AND GRADUAL INCREASE, instead of being loosely accumulated at first, and then rapidly expanded; that it should DEVELOP ITSELF FROM WITHIN, rather than be swiftly, but externally augmented.—This, which sometimes is charged on the Puritans as a rigorous narrowness, was really an inseparable part of their scheme, and essential, as they thought, to the proper and wise development of the rest. It harmonized with, was the complement to, the preceding principle; and furnished the mechanism through which their invisible spirit was to work. In this view, although it is not unfamiliar, it claims and deserves to be carefully examined.

The early colonies differed, as we know, materially, and even widely, in some of the details of their civil organization. The colonists at Plymouth, few in number and unconspicuous, a mere fragment thrown off from the great world of England, and drifting through space in their own hired ship to a shore which pestilence had prepared for their coming, were secure, at least, of the kindly and sheltering neglect of the monarchy; its beneficent forgetfulness. And so they established their own form of government in the cabin of the Mayflower, and made themselves "a civil body politic," with equality of rights for their prime provision, and a perfect democracy for their fundamental law.

The colony of Massachusetts Bay, on the other hand, which was larger, wealthier, and more prominent than this, being organized at the start on a patent from the Crown which contemplated a constant supervision of its affairs by the company in England, and having become an independent colony only by the unforeseen transfer of that patent, and the bodily emigration of the company itself, from the Old World to the New,—this colony had less of the purely democratic, had naturally more of a centralizing tendency, in its constitution and practice, from the first. The ultimate authority vested, indeed, in the body of the Freemen. But the Governor and the Assistants had also fixed and large prerogatives. The very number of the Freemen, indeed, was limited to those who had become such under the Patent, with those who should afterwards be admitted by them. And it was only through resolute and unwearying effort, extending over years, involving wide agitation and discussion, seizing every occasion for its fresh exhibition, and cresting almost annually to a positive aggression, that the body of the people pressed up their way, through all the restrictions and encumbrances of

the charter, to the recognized right of making their laws, and electing their officers.

In Connecticut, again, the Constitution at first was of singular liberality; the elective franchise belonging to all the members of the towns, who had taken the oath of allegiance to the Commonwealth, and the magistrates and legislators being chosen by them, in annual ballot; while still later, in New Haven, this rule was modified by limiting the franchise to the members of the church, and making the Bible, by popular enactment, the book of statutes.

But still, amid these formal diversities, certain general principles are everywhere manifest in the Puritan plan for constituting the State; and in each of the several districts I have named these principles were recognized, and carefully embodied. They tend, as we observe them, not to form the State to the ungirt proportions of a casual democracy, promiscuous and undisciplined, thrown together by fortune, united only by the accident of neighborhood, and swaying and oscillating in transitory impulse; but, rather, to the close and well-knit structure of an organized, compacted, and permanent Government, with due subordinations and supremacies of parts, and with powers restricted to those competent to wield them. The State was a body, not a mass, on their theory; a vital organism, far-extending, many-membered, yet uni-centric, and everywhere pervaded by one living spirit; not a mere mechanical aggregation of persons. And they would scarcely have thought it possible to carry on permanently, to successful issues, the experiment of self-government, without such a careful internal organization. "GOVERNMENT BY THE BEST," was always their aim; with established deposits, as well as with definite limits and checks, of authority and power. And out of this due increase was to come.

The Family was primitive, central, germinal, in the Puritan Commonwealth; at once a State and a Church in itself, with the father for magistrate and minister of God, the children and servants for subjects and disciples. And to the maintaining and upbuilding of the Family, and the furtherance of it in fulfilment of these functions, many sections of the early legislation of New England, as well as the force of public opinion, and the offices of the Church, were carefully directed. Both the scope and the limits of parental authority were patiently defined; and while an intelligent precaution was taken to withhold from a Father who might prove tyrannous, an undue authority over his dependents—such as might be found prejudicial to their life, or the free and various development of their powers,—on the other hand his rightful prerogatives were outlined, with as shrewd a precision, and he was distinctly protected by the law in the exercise of these. Being made responsible for the training of his household, he was gifted with powers to meet the responsibility; and within his own house his supremacy was fixed.

Thus the earliest aim of the Puritan legislation was to make the Family the real seminary and seed-field, out of which should arise the enlarging Commonwealth; in which the relative subordinations and leaderships, the obligations and the offices of the State, should be imaged, and from which should proceed the practised minds, and the disciplined wills, to direct and administer public affairs. It made each household an independent community; an actual, central, self-determined Commonwealth; where the proper authority of law should be recognized; where men should learn to command in after life, by having been taught to obey in their youth; and where, in a real though a miniature development, all the functions of the State should be prophesied and fulfilled. The family-affection here in-

culcated, was to be the germ of patriotism afterward; the fealty to a Father, to expand and ascend into loyalty to the State; and the habit of command, in the Parent himself, to prepare him to fill, and worthily to discharge, high public trusts. And no other part of the Puritan plan was really so essential to the integrity and well-working of their whole scheme of government as this, their assiduous protection of the Family.

The moment we pass the boundaries of this institute, complete in itself, and in place primordial, we come to that principle of alliance and federation which was equally familiar to the Puritan communities, and which gave them coherence, with capacity for expansion. All the households residing within certain fixed limits composed the Town; and the heads of these households, with those who had been trained to a suitable age under their own supervision and government, or who had resided long enough among them to become imbued with their principles and spirit, were the recognized electors and governors of that Town; by whose free choice its operations were directed, and from whose intelligent and uncontrolled suffrages each election proceeded.

If the Family approximated therefore a limited monarchy in its constitution—the authority of the parent, while presumed to be limited by wisdom and by love, and while positively limited by encompassing statutes, being still asserted as judicial and supreme—the Town, on the other hand, approximated in its constitution and government a perfect democracy; the right of voting being limited, indeed, to those who were presumed to be qualified for it—in some instances, as I said, to those who were church-members, in others to those elected Freemen—but being entire and permanent among these, inalienable save by removal or crime, and

the vote of each man being equal in the count to that of his older or wealthier neighbor. Yet the same ideas of the rightful authority and preëminence of the governors, which were implanted and carefully nourished in the Family institute, were extended in spirit to the officers of the Town; and when these had once been fairly elected, they claimed and received a kind of respect which, now, in these days of official delinquency and of popular suspiciousness, would seem grotesque. They exercised, indeed, a positive power, as guardians of the peace and the weal of the public, which we should scarcely intrust to any.

The many Towns, confederated again, and all represented in the general councils, made up the State. They legitimated its government, appointed its officers, and framed its legislation; and they were competent to revise and change the very organic law that shaped it. The State did not ordain the Towns, and intrust to them their powers and prerogatives; but the Towns, with these inherent and primitive, sprang up themselves around each church, and made the general Government for their minister. In Plymouth, therefore, for nearly twenty years, the whole body of male inhabitants, of lawful age, composed the Legislature. They decided executive and judicial questions, also, as convened for that purpose. They were, in fact and in law, the Government; with nothing above them, nearer than the stars! And when afterward, through their increase, this came to be impossible, representatives of the Towns succeeded to their power.

Again the principle of alliance and federation,—which naturally extended in its further development from one Colony to another, which made in 1643 the "United Colonies of New England" to be in some respects as one, and which thus became the germ of our

whole existing confederate system,—again this principle was vigorously applied, linking Towns with one another in a great body composite, protecting each, and renewing its force, by allying it with the rest, and making of the separated arrows one sheaf. And again the principle of the just subordination and subjection of the governed, and of the rightful authority of the governors, which had been recognized and incorporate in the Family, and thence in the Town, was established and maintained in application to the State; and that federation of co-operating communities, while annually revising and reconstituting its government, and insisting, against all sermons and treatises, on rotation in office, attributed to its officers, and readily secured for them, a degree of intelligent and honorable respect which it now would seem absurd to attempt; which looks, indeed, almost inexplicable as we trace it in history.

While essentially Republican, then, as well as free and autonomic, the plan of the earlier Puritan commonwealths was *not*, in the popular sense, Democratic. It had its root always, and substantially its prototype, in the Family constitution. It contemplated, throughout, an internal organization thorough and close-wrought, involving a fixed subordination of parts. It did not design to make all men voters, irrespective of character, but only those who were qualified to vote; and though it fixedly vested in these the ultimate supremacy, it still encouraged in no degree their hasty, unorganized, or irregular action. Its governors were real Governors, and not merely representatives of a popular caprice. Its legislators and magistrates, though deriving their authority in each case from the people, were yet accepted as in a high sense the Fathers of the State, and were honored accordingly. And never, I think, in

any Monarchy, or any Republic, has the internal structure of the government been closer, more carefully compacted, more firmly and finely knit together, than in those new States, where the people ruled all, where the judges themselves were elected every year, and where it was held to be a species of treason to appeal from the Commonwealth unto the Crown.

And all this was for a definite purpose. There was nothing accidental or fortuitous in it. It had its foundation, not in tradition. They were severed from that! Those ears that had heard the persecuting shears snapping around them, were closed thenceforth to the voices of tradition! The sea, too, had set its billowy thunder between them and the Past. Their frame of the government had its spring in their own intelligent judgment. The Past did not impose it; but the Future inspired it. It was carefully planned, and firmly ordained, to secure the prevalence throughout their communities of that high and positive spiritual life of which I have spoken, as the power to which the Puritans looked for all their success and all their advance. To work this into the minds of the members, first of the Family, then of the Town, and finally of the State, to make it everywhere effective and paramount, and secure its propagation through subsequent years,—to this their whole apparatus of government was anxiously adjusted.

They did not desire to expand the Commonwealth over very large territory. They preferred to have it confined to small boundaries, and to have each separate shoot that went out from it strike down its own root, and grow up for itself. They did not encourage, but distinctly discouraged, a promiscuous immigration, even of Englishmen, to the shores they were peopling. They were even somewhat fearful of the influences of

commerce. And while their hardy sailors went out, from a very early period, to engage in the fisheries, and to prosecute a traffic both coastwise and transmarine, and while that manly art of ship-building, which now makes all the seaboard ring, was early introduced, they preferred, as far as possible, to retain both their men and their products at home, and to build up whatever of mechanisms they needed for the comfort of life, from their own resources, rather than to import these from abroad. Linen, woollen, iron implements, gunpowder, they tried to make them all at home, and to have no occasion to go over sea for them. And they would not allow to the Parliament of their friends any more authority over their affairs, than they had allowed to Charles First, and to Laud.

It was all because they sought in these methods to make the peculiar spiritual force in which they trusted, of individual conscientiousness, religious conviction, and a voluntary deference to public justice, paramount and prevalent throughout the State; and to realize that slow but shapely growth which should follow this, and spring from its life. Any rapid enlargement of resources, or of territory, which should be attended by the hazard of this, they dreaded as a curse, and persistently warded off. They wanted their small, but well organized States to be strong in the inward agreement of their members, their common intelligence, their mutual fealty, their ethical fidelity, and their religious consecration; and then to grow from poverty to wealth, from fewness of numbers to a large population, from their early deficiency in the means of enjoyment, and of social cultivation, to affluence in all these—not by gathering them from abroad, so much as by creating them on their own soil, from their own energetic and fruitful life. They defined their Towns, and made

them compact, forbidding the erection of any dwelling-house in them at a distance of more than half a mile from the meeting-house. They granted their lands to companies, generally, not to persons, that a number of families might settle together, and that public opinion might at once be formed and influential among them.

A population interiorly compacted and harmonized by the moral agreement and concord of its members, and the prevalence among all of those governing principles which the Bible had revealed, and the Fathers had accepted; a population spreading out by degrees to new districts, but subduing, cultivating, transforming, as it went, carrying schools with it, churches, colleges, and all the structures of social life; breaking off at the frontier, the moment it touched that, to a separate life, and starting up there into new communities, with similar institutions, and the same public sentiment;—a population which, to its furthest limits, up among the mountains where the bridle-path followed the trail of the Indian, down upon the sea-coast where the sail was just glancing above the canoe, should still in all parts be pervaded and governed, and vitally integrated, by the spirit first brought here in the casket of the Mayflower, and afterward re-enforced from the Jewel, the Ambrose, and the Lady Arbella;—this was what the Puritans aimed at! They made no plan, and they had no wish, for a mere aggregation of numbers and of treasures, aside from this; and they built all their hopes of realizing the Ideal which they had brought hither, on their probable success in accomplishing this.

From such a real and vital formation, closely organized around the Family centre, a slow, but certain and normal growth was sure to come; and that they sought. It was GROWTH they were after, and not mere increase; growth from a root, in obedience to an inward organ-

izing law, and not mere outward adventitious additions. The State was a body, not a building, in their plan; and they wished it compacted by a permeating life, not simply set together, mortised and clamped.

And however we may dissent from their methods, and think we discern an unwisdom in them which we have outgrown, we cannot but perceive the real unity of their plan, and render the tribute of our respect to what was at once so novel and complete. They made an aristocracy; but it was one of character, never of property, in which the servant, if a freeman of the Church, might be a legislator, while the wealthiest master, if irreligious, was a subject. They held their town-meetings in the church, of set purpose; because the affairs to be there transacted should properly be governed by the spirit of religion. They opened their legislative sessions with a sermon, on the same vital plan; and enjoined it on the magistrates to recognize and enforce the discipline of the Church. They strove systematically to incorporate into laws that vision of Milton—the State as one great Christian Man, with sinews strung, and mighty members, but with religious convictions for the breath of its frame! And what they did is approved by the issue. They said themselves, when Cromwell invited them to emigrate to Ireland, "Our government is the wisest and the happiest this day, on the face of the earth!" And the country has felt the pressure of their influence, and must feel it more, even unto the end, in great part because they organized so carefully, while believing so firmly; and though trusting in the spirit of personal faith as their ultimate life, they gave this a mechanism, through which to work, most close and compact. Here they showed themselves men of administrative skill, and not visionary theorists. And if human nature was

too stiff for them at last, and the Millennium too distant to allow their success, they yet with rarest force and zeal made their effort to open to the province which they peopled the nobler Era!

But still a Third principle in the Puritan scheme concerning National Growth, was this: that while proceeding from a central and positive spiritual life, and working out through a compact organization, into a gradual shapely increase, it SHOULD BE ATTENDED WITH NOBLE FRUITS; it should be, indeed, in order to such FRUITS, of high and pure character, and beneficent action; and, unless the State gained these as its result, it had failed to vindicate its right to be, it had failed to fulfil its office in the world.

No man can read the earlier records of the history of New England, without seeing this aim shining brightly above them, or without being impressed by its purity and its dignity.

Even in Holland the Pilgrims had been moved by "an inward zeal of advancing the Gospel in the remote parts of the New World;" "yea," they added, with a lofty humility which challenges our reverence, "though we should be but as stepping-stones unto others, for performing so great a work." And in the compact signed in the Mayflower, it was declared that they had undertaken the voyage "for the glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian faith," as well as "for the honor of king and country."—The same was true of the immigrants to the Bay. "For that the propagating of the Gospel," said the company in their first letter of instructions to Endicott and his council, "for that the propagating of the Gospel is the thing we do profess above all to be our aim in settling this plantation, we have been careful to make plentiful provision of godly ministers, by whose faithful preaching, godly

conversation, and exemplary life, we trust not only those of our own nation will be built up in the knowledge of God, but also the Indians may, in God's appointed time, be reduced to the obedience of the Gospel of Christ." And in the Charter itself it is averred, that "to win and invite the natives of the country to the knowledge and obedience of the only true God and Saviour of mankind, and the Christian faith, in our royal intention, and the adventurers' free profession, is the principal end of this plantation."

In the oath of the Governor it was therefore solemnly incorporated: "and, likewise, you shall do your best endeavors to draw on the natives of this country, called New England, to the knowledge of the true God; and to conserve the planters, and others coming hither, in the same knowledge and fear of God." On the earliest seal of the Massachusetts Colony, over the figure of the Indian that still stands there, instead of the present Latin legend quoted fitly from Algernon Sidney, was blazoned that stirring Macedonian cry which Paul had heard amid the ruins of Troy, on the night that followed that memorable day when his eye first caught the summits of Europe, "Come over and help us!" In 1646, immediately on the close of the Pequot war, the General Court of Massachusetts passed their formal act to encourage the carrying of the Gospel to the Indians, and recommended it earnestly to the elders of the churches to consider how this might best be done. And in 1663, within little more than twenty years after the first printing press, given from Holland, had been set up at Cambridge, the Bible was printed there, in the Algonquin tongue, the current dialect of the New England tribes.

To establish the Gospel, and spread it broadcast, in the new and untracked wildernesses before them, to con-

vert the savages to the knowledge of the truth, and to open above their darkened souls the gates of grace, was thus the cardinal aim of the Colony. They sought in this way, so difficult and obscure, yet morally so grand, to add to man's good, and to advance God's honor.

Yet, not only this, but also to establish great Christian Commonwealths, full, to the end, of a purifying influence, was comprised in their plan. Winthrop had intimated this, in those "General Conclusions" attributed to him, wherein he said that "to raise a bulwark against the kingdom of anti-Christ," and "to accomplish an enterprise whose main end should be not carnal, but religious," was the purpose of the colonists. Higginson, when he was leaving England, after that fervent and majestic Farewell which can never be forgotten, "to the Church of God in England, and all dear Christian friends there," said, as the shores faded out from his sight, "we go to practise the positive part of Church reformation, and to propagate the Gospel in America." When afterward he preached his last memorable sermon, on the arrival of many gentlemen from England, as he was himself just preparing to depart from those then recent settlements to the City above, his text was, "What went ye out into the wilderness to see?" And his answer was, in substance, to establish a pure and religious Commonwealth, within which the Gospel should reign supreme, and from which it should be widely dispersed. "In the very hour of death," says Bancroft, "the future prosperity of New England, and *the coming glories of its many churches*, floated in cheering visions before his eyes."

For this end Harvard College was planned and founded, within the first struggling decennary of the colony, and out of the midst of its uttermost poverty; the very ferry being taxed to enable its teachers to

guide young minds on their search through the Past, or their perilous flights beyond Sirius and Aldebaran. For this it was enjoined that each town of fifty families must support a free school; and each town of a hundred families a grammar school, in which youth might be trained for the University. And for this, everywhere, the Church was made prominent as the real centre, the organizing power, in each community; and the ministers were consulted in all plans of government.

John Cotton had said, before leaving England, in that noble Church of St. Botolph in Boston where he ministered, whose size and beauty rival those of cathedrals, and whose tower is seen forty miles out at sea, that his aim in his ministry there had been "to promote a threefold concord among his people; between God and their consciences, between true-hearted loyalty and Christian liberty, between the fear of God and the love of their neighbors." This was the aim which he brought with him, in that long voyage where "three sermons a day beguiled the weariness of the passengers," when he came to the newer and less promising Boston, which, as Mather says, "upon some accounts of growth soon came to exceed Old Boston in every thing that makes a town considerable." This was the aim of those with whom, and upon whom, he acted; and this at once defines and exalts their purpose in coming. "COLONIES ARE THE FOUNDATIONS OF GREAT COMMONWEALTHS," said the General Court of Massachusetts in their answer to Parliament, in 1646. And to make those coming Commonwealths pure and Christian, prosperous and powerful for a noble beneficence, was the constant hope of those who were planting them. They felt themselves, as Winthrop the younger said in England, "indented to God's glory, in so special a

service." And when the confederacy of the Five coöperating Colonies was formed, its object still was, not the mere political protection of its members, but the "sustentation of the truth, and the liberties of the Gospel."

The Pilgrims would have held that State most imperfect which contented itself, and complacently rested, in its own advancement and special prosperities, without seeking to benefit others around it. They esteemed that progress to be radically wanting in greatness and value, which was a mere progress in power and wealth, and in physical success; which gained no results of great character and culture, and blossomed out to no wealthy fruits of enlarged Christian knowledge. The moral, to them, was superior to the physical; the attainments of Christian wisdom and piety, above accumulations of worldly resources; the alliance of the soul with God, through faith, above the conquest and mastery of Nature. And to these they held the State to be tributary, as they held all things else that existed on the earth; the very earth itself, and its laws.

They themselves were ordained to this, by a personal baptism of the Spirit of God. Their communities were ordained to it, by that Providence of God which had marshalled them hither, and had opened before them the paths of the wilderness. They anticipated, therefore, and carefully arranged for this from the outset: that the noble character, which at first was brought hither by Endicott, Winthrop, Saltonstall, Johnson, or earlier still, by Carver, Bradford, Brewster, and their fellows, should be preserved, exalted, reenforced, and more widely distributed, in generations to come; that the lights of learning, rekindled here, should burn with only a brighter flame than they ever had shown on the shores of the Old World; that the

institutes of religion should have a solid and enduring foundation in the States they erected; and that great, and wise, and wide-reaching efforts, for man's good and God's glory, should be the ultimate, the ever-repeated product and fruit, of all their large and arduous enterprise! Not a mere police establishment was the State on their theory; accomplishing its office in protecting its subjects, and punishing criminals. It was to them a place and a power of the noblest education; a teeming nursery of all good influence and heavenly growths, from which Letters, Charities, and Salvation should proceed, and in which they should perpetually be nourished. Philanthropic endeavors, and missionary enterprises, were to be its results; the proofs of its prosperity; the real and imperishable rewards of its founders. It existed, in order that characters might be formed, commanding, large, and full of light, whose record should make all history brighter, whose influence should link the earth with the skies. And they expected Millennium itself, with its long eras of peace and of purity, of tranquil delight and illuminated wisdom, to spring, as the last and crowning fruitage, from the States they were founding, and from others like them.

It was this which inspired them to come hither as they did, and not the mere pressure of strictness at home which drove most of them hither. They came as drawn, not driven out; attracted by a purpose, not exiled by an edict; to make the world better, through the States they were to found, and not merely to escape the supervision of constables. They sacrificed much, and they knew all they sacrificed. But they poured it all as precious ointment on the feet of this enterprise, which to them was Divine! They left the fairest parts of England—old homes to which their

hearts were rooted; old ways in which their infancy had tottered; the streams on whose banks they had won their brides; the ancient churches, whose walls were still brightened with the scutcheons of their ancestors, and at whose altars they had worshipped themselves, or had joyfully ministered; they left the shadows of Universities that had trained them, and all the storied and venerated scenes which grappled their hearts with hooks of steel; as Hubbard said of the Lady Arbella, the daughter of the noble house of Lincoln, they "came from a paradise of plenty and peace, to a wilderness of wants," where often, as with her, their very life was shattered in the transfer—because they sought and expected to rear here not only States pervaded by one life, compacted thoroughly, and steadily increasing, but States whose FRUIT should reward all their effort; whose results, of enlightenment, and of human salvation, running on through the centuries, should culminate at last in the glories of that Day when the Heavens and the Earth shall be one in their life! And except for this we had no New England, and no recurring "Forefathers' Day" to rain on us its great inspirations!

And in this, assuredly, the Puritans were wise, large-minded, large-hearted, philosophic, philanthropic, we might say poetic! And History, however she dissents from their methods, must reverence their aim! A State *is* for Fruit, and not for its own mere maintenance and growth. Whensoever, and so far as, any State upon earth has contributed to this, has advanced and upbuilded the moral life of mankind, its influence and renown become thereby imperishable. We value the Roman Empire to-day, not for the palaces that shone on the Palatine, or the arches that spanned the great current of the triumph as it swept along the Sa-

cred Way; not because its helmets flashed over the earth, and fronted on one hand the auroral dawn of Indian plains, while gleaming on the other through the night of the Hebrides; but because it has given us something of poetry, much of eloquence, because it created the Civil Law for us, that growth of centuries, which still has a recognized power in our courts, and because a glorious patriotism was born in it which yet lifts its standards over the centuries. We value the brilliant States of Greece, because of their splendid contributions to letters, to the art of the world, and its ideas of government; because Liberty, thence flying like a shining Apollo, has borne its light to Western climes; and because the great fathers and exemplars of Greece still instruct and inspire us by their primitive heroism. We value the English growth and history, because our world has inherited from it not Shakspeare only, Bacon, Milton, but the Common Law, Constitutional Liberty, Protestant Christianity, and the English Bible; because there streams on us an influence from cloister and college, from pulpit and parliament, from the scaffolds that have risen there, and the parish churches that trained men for them; from all the great centuries that have marched over England, with their industries and struggles, their glorious resistances, their sacraments of martyrdom, and their triumphs of Right! Till the globe is dissolved, the energy thence diffused shall never die out of the history of mankind; and, therefore, until the globe is dissolved, the name of England shall be one of its watchwords!

And we must agree that the Puritans were right, wise, noble, in seeking to make the States they formed only means of results, which, though invisible, should be immortal; which, while as spiritual as light and air, should be like these renewing powers in the history of

the World! It would not have been according to their nature, or according to God's great training of them, that they should have aimed at less than this; and the fact that they sought this, commands our respect, and justifies our reverence! It shows them, again, not mechanics, but architects, in the building of States; not mere fanatical adventurers and religionists, frightened fugitives flying from despotism, or ascetic devotees of a rigorous doctrine, but men of purpose, faith, and forecast; the height of whose minds is proved and measured by the height of their aims; the width, and length, and unity of whose plans demonstrate their greatness.

Not artisans only, but artists they were; of a certain colossal cyclopean order, yet with the rarest dreams of beauty! They thought little of the colors that blushed upon the canvas; but the mountains and the sea were the frame of that picture which they designed to brighten with towns, and to fill with all forms of beneficent industry. They sang in their churches without aid of instruments, in stanzas not smooth, and tones not tuneful; but they meant so to mingle the elements which they brought here, and those they invited, that from them should flow, in harmonious procession, the cadence of a History chiming on through the centuries, full of faith and of praise! They had little regard for the products of the chisel, that makes the marble start to action, and almost throb with the quivers of life. But they meant to carve those rugged heights which gloomed around them, to the pedestal of a Form such as John had seen, in his older Patmos, when the Heavens unfurled their splendors to him! And they who deride them, or they who neglect them, may be challenged to show a more majestic ideal! God's own inspirations are revealed in its grandeur!

My Friends, it is an honor to have sprung from these men! It is a great office to do what we may to accomplish their design! We assemble amid scenes, as I said at the outset, which widely contrast those they confronted in establishing their States. Those narrow and crooked paths through Boston, which certainly nothing but a marvellous enthusiasm could have prompted Johnson to call "comely streets," as matched against this resounding Broadway, with the splendors that deck it, the hurry and the brightness of traffic and of fashion that constantly throng it; that shadow of the tree under which they assembled, to hear the words of Preacher or Governor, as set against this elaborate edifice,[1] with its gateways and galleries, its granite walls and springing windows, its fair proportions crusted with ornament; these tell the story, without other help, of our physical advance! These show what equipments of wealth we have gathered, in two centuries and a quarter; and these may properly so far impress us as to make us grateful to God for His kindness, and hopeful for that Future of which such are the means!

But let not our wealth, as contrasting their poverty, ever hide from us the real eminence in character of our Fathers, or diminish our sense of the value and the grandeur of the plans they brought hither. Let us recognize the fact, for it certainly is one, that the nature of those plans is not comprehended, or if comprehended is departed from constantly, in our social life and our civil history; and that, while the principles which were sacred to them have been the secret of our prosperity, the invisible workmen that have builded it all, those others, which now obtain among us, if left unchecked, will work opposite effects for those who come after.

[1] The oration was delivered in the Church of the Messiah.

I certainly am no devotee of the Past. I am not afraid of the Present and its tendencies, nor timid for the Future. I believe that the soil which was consecrated to God by that first stormy Sabbath, kept by the Pilgrims on a desolate island while not far off the Mayflower hovered, shall remain an asylum for His truth and for Freedom, till the sun has ceased to greet the pines, and the surge has failed to heave at Plymouth. Those settlements which so manifestly were ordered of God, and ordered for some great ultimate purpose, did not come out to their final fruitage at Lexington and at Concord, or when the sheeted storm of fire swept down its rain and iron hail along the sides of Bunker's Hill. Our national independence was not their whole product; nor the subsequent swift and vast expansion of population and industry over the even then unexplored West, making the valleys beauteous with homes, making the mountains laugh with harvests. The influence of that early religious colonization is still undoubtedly to travel on, over the mountains and into the Future; and to bring forth its fruits in a coming civilization, when we, and all these homes of ours, are quite forgot. The spirit and the power of the Fathers shall not fail from the future development and advance of our country, till their vision is fulfilled, and the East and the West, clasping hands over a continent, stand up at last, mighty and pure, to regenerate the World! On the pillars of this hope it is ours to take hold, to draw from it strength. In the light of this magnificent Future it is ours to walk, with joyful steps, and an ever-ascending and triumphing faith!

But yet, while I feel this, I cannot but see that at every point which I have defined as primitive and cardinal in the plan of our Fathers, we have departed from the model they proposed; and not in the way of devel-

opment and enlargement, but of definite deviation, if not of positive contradiction and reversal.

Where they put all reliance on ideas, and were not careful of numbers or of means so long as the spiritual force and life which had built up the State continued unbroken, we base our confidence for the strength, the prosperity and the progress of our country, on the vast and increasing masses of population; on the wealth that flows in on us in a constant abundance; on the mechanisms that make all commodities cheap, and all luxuries familiar; on the commerce that connects us with every nation whose realm is productive, and the hem of whose borders sweeps outward to the sea. Religion with us, especially in the cities, instead of being supreme as with them, the law of our growth, and the life of our success, is rather an ornament of civilization; a perquisite of the rich; a social accomplishment; almost one of the fine arts; a pleasant accompaniment to eloquence and to music, but utterly out of place when attempting to inspire, to restrain or direct men. Its great Institutions turn pale, and are dumb, before the mandates of Power! Like the sculptures on an architrave, they are prominent in place, not an element of strength. Public justice now wants the sacredness it had in the Puritan commonwealths; is a service of interest, whose legitimacy is doubted, not an austere and solemn sacrament of Right. And that so high and glorious doctrine of Personal Liberty which they brought hither, and which, if they did not apply it to all men, they applied to themselves with a constancy and a vividness that made fire-balls but its exponents,—how far it has dropped out from the practice of our government, and almost from the plan of its administration, is indicated on our coins, is recorded in the current histories of the day, is disastrously proclaimed in the novel and partisan decisions of courts.

Instead of sternly curbing luxury, we, by every means possible, invite and assist it. Instead of discouraging a promiscuous immigration, we make the land echo with a polyglot of tongues, and drain every monarchy to replenish our West. Instead of small States, and those thoroughly organized, we seek to make each successive one larger; to spread it to ten times, twenty times, forty times, the size of those first formed; and then we measure its importance and greatness by its square leagues of soil, its navigable rivers, the mines that are in it, and the frontier wildernesses that fringe its circumference, not by the might of MEN in its homes. We disregard families, we override towns, even, in constituting these States; accepting no divisions more definite than of counties, and basing the right of suffrage solely on the two conditions of age and color, without reference to character or to previous training. We seek to expand artificially, swiftly, to a visible greatness, where the Puritans planned to organize, and to educate, and to grow up by small and gradual increments. We aggregate men from all climes and tongues, and call that a nation which is only a casual human sand-bar, accidentally heaped together, from different soils, by meeting currents, while they sought to make a nation grow up, homogeneous and compact, of shapely development, rooted in the soil, springing like the oak, integrating solidly each part with the rest before seeking others, and swelling each year with an annulus of development.

Instead of proposing to ourselves, as a people, any great, enduring and noble FRUIT, of beneficent action, of illustrious character, of moral impression on the world we are part of, as the product of our national expansion and power, we desire and consult for the mere material increase of the State, and only mean to lead the nations in civic prosperity and in physical en-

terprise; to make them wonder at our affluence, not our charity; to out-race and out-sail them, not to lead them on our march to a difficult philanthropy. That our mines are the richest, our cataracts the largest, our prairies the widest, our lakes the longest, our clippers the fleetest, our steamers the most sumptuous, our government the most free, flexible, and wealthy, our people the most enterprising, shrewd, and successful,— this is the natural boast of Americans, with which today they perambulate Europe, and astonish the Turk! And the spiritual development and formation of character, like Washington's or John Jay's, we hardly have seen any tendencies to this since the epoch of the Revolution. The drift has been strong the other way; turning statesmen into demagogues, rather than educating sciolists to be statesmen. The undertaking or the fostering of great missionary enterprises, to enlighten and elevate a barbarous people, no dreamer would venture to suggest that to Congress. The founding and the nurturing of large institutions, for the blessing and helping of those who come after, has almost passed from the plans of our States. It is left, nearly everywhere, to mere private munificence; and the only National Institute we have, for preserving, advancing, and distributing knowledge, was the gift to us of a foreigner, who never, I think, stepped foot on our shores.

In a word, the spiritual is not supreme with us; the material is. Engineering is to us what interpreting the Scriptures was to the Fathers. Where they sent missionaries, we send the agents of secular trade, or stealthily let loose piratical filibusters. Where they intrenched the culture of the people behind their highest and firmest muniments, we dedicate government to the guardianship of property, and leave all else to take

care of itself. And in place of that all-pervading life, of religious conviction and personal consecration, which the Fathers sought to secure and perpetuate through a careful organization, with the Family at its centre, we trust in chariots that roll over the land at thirty miles to the hour, and in horses that make the very deep but a roadway!

Now it is not for us with prostrate souls to bewail these tendencies, as if there were nothing but unmingled harm in them; as if we could do nothing but look backward with praises, and glorify the Past, while lamenting the Present! The office of garnishing sepulchres is not ours, nor that of framing commemorative odes. It is ours rather to accept the present stage as one preordained stage in our national development; to be glad of and to welcome all the agencies which it offers us—of a printing-press everywhere, and a commerce every whither; of steam beating through the fastnesses of the hills, and crossing the craggiest chasms at a leap; of lightning flying on through the interweaved wires, and flashing at once over every city a common intelligence,—it is ours to accept these, and to use them for good, by bringing in more of the Puritan life, and trying to realize with new fidelity the Puritan scheme in the Nation around us. We may do this without any thing of narrowness in our sympathies; without any thing of inordinate deference to our ancestry.

Each national stock that came hither at first, brought something real, and something important, to the whole great product. We claim in this assembly no solitary indebtedness to the Fathers of New England. The Hollanders who settled at this mouth of the Hudson, the Cavaliers of Virginia, the Catholics of Maryland, the Huguenots of the Carolinas, the Friends of Penn-

sylvania, each had their special wealth to add to that unparalleled christening-gift, of genius, will, and eminent character, with which the new-born Empire here first started from the ocean that was to it as a font! We honor them all for their worth and their service. But the Puritans added theirs, as well as the others; and we, as by nature representatives of them, are to take heed that what to them was peculiar does not die out of the history of the land.

They were not, certainly, infallible men. In some gifts of nature, they were doubtless defective; and the circumstances they met here did not all favor them. They had drifted out, over recent seas, to a country estranged from all their associations, which was to them as another planet, and which lay before them shrouded in glooms, of forests uncut, of unrelieved winters, and of strange, idolatrous, dusky inhabitants. Something mystical and shadowy, thus entered their character. They seemed to have come near to diabolic activities. Witchcraft was not incredible to them; and strange, abnormal growths of thought were certainly realized in their new environment. Their spiritual life took a tone from the woods. The wild wrestling of the elements woke in some of them a dark sympathy. They thought Wilson a Prophet; Davenport a Moses; Anne Hutchinson to have a devil in her. When a snake came into the seat of the elders, assembled at Cambridge to construct their platform of doctrine and of polity, and Thompson of Braintree, "a man of much faith," put his heel on its head, even Winthrop believed that the Devil had come there, in his primitive form, to vex the Church. And Endicott, the undaunted and indomitable Governor, the very type of the Puritan, austere, conscientious, yet cheerful and sociable, who befriended Roger Williams, and cut out the red

cross from the banners of England, had yet his private inconstancies and frailties, and did not live up to his own ideal.

But still these men had a plan, and developed it. They worked for that plan with a sinewy skill, and a self-consecration, as well as with a positive power of mind, which we never should forget. Behind its pillar of light they trode, through a history rougher than any old wilderness, and more severe than sterile plains. And we anew should pledge ourselves to its substance. New England was dedicated to this office at the outset, by Him who gave it its place on the Continent—the place of the PULPIT—as well as by those whom He gathered to people it, and to fill it full of a common life: to be a centre and seminary of Ideas; a place from which invisible forces, to organize and to educate, should go widely forth; and we must be true to this hereditary office. Not holding ourselves limited to the definite forms and symbols of the Fathers—accepting them, if we do it, as freely as they did—we yet must make Religion, as they did, supreme and all-penetrating. Not in all things, perhaps, allowing to the Father such authority as they gave him over his household, we must not forget that the Christian Family is central, primordial, in the Christian Commonwealth; and that when this is dissevered and lost, submerged by hotels, or dissolved into boarding-schools, the end is not far.

Not altogether reproducing their ancient statutes against luxury in dress and immodest amusements, we yet must train ourselves and others to a Doric simplicity, and not a Corinthian sumptuousness of manners. Not trying to repeat merely their special humanities, we must not shrink from those harder philanthropies which now challenge us. And without re-

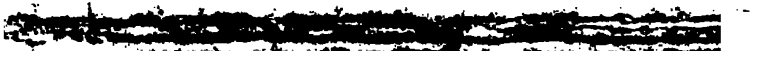
peating in stated terms that noble formula of the Oath of the Freeman in the Massachusetts Colony: "Moreover, I do solemnly bind myself, in the sight of God, that when I shall be called to give my voice, touching any such matter of the State wherein Freemen are to deal, I will give my vote and suffrage AS I SHALL JUDGE IN MINE OWN CONSCIENCE MAY BEST CONDUCE AND TEND TO THE PUBLIC WEAL OF THE BODY, without respect of persons, or favor of any man; so help me God, in the Lord Jesus Christ!" without repeating this in terms, we must incorporate its spirit in our life, and determine that no assault or pressure, of person or of government, of power or of Law, shall ever induce us to violate Conscience!

We cannot avoid these duties which are on us. The Past impels; the Future summons. God makes us mediators between ages of planting, and ages of fruitage. Deep calleth for us unto deep; those early Colonies, these coming States! We are heirs to a great and costly legacy, of valor and of virtue. The blood in our veins has flowed to us from men of unusual courage, foresight, faith. For us was the wise and heroic life of those from whom the Pilgrims came, watched over by their love, and followed by their prayers. For us was the large moderation of Winthrop, and his sterling sagacity; for us, the rugged energy of Dudley; the piety of Carver, Bradford, Wilson; for us, the beautiful grace of Lady Johnson; for us, the spirit that looked Death in the face from the clear, bright brow of Henry Vane! A cloud of witnesses gathers around us, as we stand here. Those thousand graves, among distant hills, should be each one the spring of an influence shooting up in our hearts with irrepressible energy. And they commit us, each one who has sprung from the breast of New England, to the vital appro-

priation, and the wide propagation, of those principles and that spirit which belonged to the Fathers.

Let us not be unmindful of this ever-present and sublime obligation! Let us brace ourselves to this office, and pledge ourselves here anew to its fulfilment; to incorporate in our history the pattern which they whose names we bear "saw in the mount!" So shall our work interlock itself with theirs, and carry it forward. So shall the fruits which they expected still spring from their labors, in only a greater profusion and extent than they dared anticipate. And so shall their continual prayer be answered in the issue, and God shall save that great Confederacy of interweaved and harmonized States, which shall be then ONE COMMONWEALTH!

It is now proposed to erect at Plymouth, on the spot of their landing, an obelisk to their fame; of noble height; of just proportions; wrought of the granite; circled and crowned by appropriate figures. In that fit work let us all take part! and out of the midst of our abundance, raise a trophy to them who, with a sacrifice that we cannot reckon, opened for us the gates of our prosperity. But let us, while doing this, determine also, with the utmost of our force, so far as in us lies by nature, so far as God may give us grace, to make the Land which we inherit, and along whose parallels emigration still flows from their frontier seats, their noblest monument! A people free, in every part, the aspiring shaft; universities, churches, the symbolical statues; enactments of righteousness, the bolts that gird it; the principles of philanthropy, the lines that mould its rising strength; and a Protestant Christianity, that lifts one hand to praise the Lord, and stretches the other to bless the nations, for its supreme and culminating figure!



ORATION AND RESPONSE

RALPH WALDO EMERSON

1870

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RALPH WALDO EMERSON

(1803-1882.)

No fitter choice could have been made for the speaker at the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims than that of Mr. Emerson, the personification in its greatest strength of the philosophic strain in that composite termed the New England character.

The address as printed in the newspapers was altogether faulty, and it is owing to the kindness of Dr. Edward W. Emerson that it is here given in close likeness to its original self. There are, however, many places where no comparison with an original was possible, and especially in the last two pages the errors of the reporter have doubtless done injustice to the writer.

It was near the close of Mr. Emerson's career as a speaker, this being his last public address in New York. Extracts from his reply to a toast at the dinner of this year were published in the society reports and are here included.

ORATION[1]

I GREET this assembly, met to honor, in these days of the solstice, the remembrance of this day; to compare the past and the present. Under the thoughts of this day we meet as friends, though we were all strangers to each other. The impressive virtue of the founders of the American Republic, and a fortune equal!—what a destiny! That little patch of territory by the sea, the sands of Plymouth, proved to be no castle in Spain, but the immense mistake of their charter. The territory conferred on the patentees,—in absolute property with unlimited jurisdiction, the sole powers of legislation, the appointment of all officers, etc.,—extended from the fortieth to the forty-eighth degree of north latitude and in longitude from the Atlantic to the Pacific. This immense mistake, incredible had they guessed its meaning, is literally correct to-day; but it has taken two hundred and fifty years to make it so. The pines of Plymouth woods to-day greet the mammoth sequoias of the California Coast Mountains as the mutual wealth and ornament of one vast State.

[1] This oration was not printed at the time, and the report of it then published by the *Tribune* was very imperfect.

Only a part of the original manuscript remains; from this corrections have been made, but the latter two thirds could not be thus corrected. Fortunately, a great part of this matter, but in a different arrangement, is found in the paper entitled "Boston," in vol. xii (*Natural History of the Intellect*) of Emerson's Complete Works: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston.

One law binds this expansive domain. The growth of nations is not for the most part continuous, but intermittent by successive leaps; but this nation is exceptional. It has moved as the sea does; here are calms, and there are storms; but the great tidal wave never stopped till to-day it reaches the bounds of the Continent. We have in two centuries and a half outlived the rise and fall of many dynasties. Great destinies grow by their impediments, as well or better; correct their faults, and draw new might out of them.

It is a great work this people has accomplished, if it has taken two hundred and fifty years. These men, these citizens, these planters at the little sandy Plymouth tried the crucial experiment. After many failures of great nations,—of France, of Spain, of Holland, and of England,—some of them under renowned leaders and backed by kings, to get a footing nearest to Europe on this continent, these poor English outcasts, without the aid of their government,—nay, in spite of its jealousy and enmity,—by the might of their virtue and by the diligence of their hands and the blessing of God, have to-day carried their plantation to a perfect success, and showed mankind how the work could be done. It was on a small scale; the men were few in number; the land on which they wrought was a sandy desert; it has never grown to a large population or to a fruitful country. But all the more praise to them that, against these disadvantages, they did by their good sense and their sublime virtue teach mankind how to overcome every evil that flesh is heir to, and build a free, honest and happy republic on a desert shore.

Their example was fruitful exceedingly. Year after year, as the news of their settlement, their stability and success reached Europe, new colonists arrived. They

built Salem, Boston; they peopled Connecticut; they peopled New Hampshire and Maine and Rhode Island; and, in the sequel, sent out their numbers and posterity from the farthest East to the farthest West.

Gentlemen and ladies, you know that lately a careful study of English history has shown a distinction among those early settlers which adds to the honor of Plymouth. The English reformers in Queen Elizabeth's time were of two classes, called the Puritans and the Brownists or Separatists. After the death of Henry VIII, the Brownists or Separatists resisted the Established Church and held that the Church was the spiritual association, Christ being its sole head. The Puritans, returning from exile after Elizabeth had settled the Establishment, were disappointed that the principles of the Reformation were not carried farther, but most of them accepted the change,—Royal Supremacy, Uniformity of Articles of Religion,—these men remaining within the Church. The early Puritans were *within* the Establishment, the Separatists or Brownists *outside* of the Establishment. In 1582, Act 23d, Elizabeth made it treason to worship except in accordance with the form prescribed by law, and the Separatists were brought to the scaffold. John Scopping and Elias Thatcher, in 1576, were executed at Bury-St.-Edmunds, and William Dennis in Norfolk. Great was the behavior of John Penry, a Welshman, put to death at Thomas-a-Watering near London by Archbishop Whitgift in May, 1593. These Separatists are the originators and settlers of Plymouth Colony. There was nothing left for them but flight—their death was sure if they remained in England. John Robinson, pastor of Scrooby, then of Leyden, William Brewster, at whose house in Scrooby the Church met, and William Bradford, Governor afterward of Plymouth,—these

were Separatists. Later, under Archbishop Bancroft, the Puritans also within the Church came under persecution, and then they formed the compact to go to America in 1628. These say in their Letter, "We do not go to New England as Separatists from the Church of England, though we cannot but separate from the corruptions in it." The fathers of Plymouth were not Puritans, but Brownists and Separatists, and commonly called by distinction Pilgrims because there was nothing but Pilgrimage or flight before them; while those who settled later, as, for instance, the settlers of Boston ten years later, Governor Winthrop and Dudley and others, were Puritans.

At daybreak on the 9th of November, 1620, the Mayflower came in sight, not of the banks of the Hudson, which was their destination, but of the white sands of Cape Cod, the bare and bended arm of Massachusetts. They steered to the South, but falling on dangerous shoals, returned and came within the Cape, and, two days later, anchored in the harbor of Provincetown. Their arrival was only the first step. The repairing of their boat, the searching, the weary searching of the shores in the snow and the frost—many of these necessities detained them long. Their survey to find a suitable country occupied thirty days, and not until the 11th of December, which in our calendar is the 21st of December, two hundred and fifty years ago to-day, the exploring party of Carver, Bradford, Winslow and eight others of the principal men, in the shallop, with eight seamen, decided to plant themselves on the Plymouth shore, "and returned to the ship with this news to the rest of their people,—which did much comfort their hearts." It took several days to bring the ship and its company to the harbor. After new surveys, when with prayer and praise they had fixed on the spot

whereon to build, they were delayed by storm and the sacred Sunday, then laid out their little town, and began their work on Monday the 25th, which was Christmas. "We went on shore, some to' fell timber, some to saw, some to rive, some to carry, and no man rested on that day."

It took long to gather materials of every kind, to lay out the lots for the public, and for the individual families. You know the endless afflictions that followed. Out of the one hundred and one which the company counted, half perished in the first year. When new recruits came they were scant of bread for themselves. "They are forced to send vessels to Monhegan to buy bread of the ships that came there a-fishing; forced to live on ground nuts, clams, and mussels. The men, in companies of six or seven, take their turns in the boat, go out with the net and fish, and return not till they get some, though they be five or six days out. The rest go a-digging shell-fish, and thus we live the summer, only sending one or two men to range the forest for deer. They now and then get one, and in winter are helped with fowl and ground nuts."

John Smith writes (1624) of this country: "Of all the four parts of the world that I have yet seen, not inhabited, could I but have means to transport a colony, I would rather live here [in Massachusetts] than anywhere, and if it did not maintain itself, were we but once indifferently well fitted, let us starve." Massachusetts he calls "the Paradise of these parts," notices its high mountains—perhaps in Massachusetts, then, he saw the peaks of the White Mountains. Like Morton, the more he looked, the more he liked the country. In 1620 the ground was covered with snow. Snow and moonlight make all places alike, and the weariness of the sea, the shrinking from the cold weather and the

pangs of hunger must justify them. But the next colony planted itself at Salem, and the next at Weymouth, and another at Medford. These men, using their eyes instead of jumping at the first sight of land, wisely judged that the best point for a city was at the bottom of a deep and islanded bay with a considerable river penetrating the inland.

In all ages the superstitious have believed that to certain spots on the surface of the planet certain powers attach, and an exalted influence on the genius of man. There is great testimony of discriminating persons to the effect that Rome is endowed with the enchanting property of inspiring a longing in men to live and die there. The Emperor Charles V thought of Florence in the same manner, and London has laid its claim to the same character for the last thousand years. Physiologists have said, "There is in the air a hidden food of life," and they believed the air of mountains and the seashore a potent predisposer to rebellion. It was remarked that insulary people are versatile and addicted to change, both in religious and secular affairs, and it is remarked that such was the force of New England's climate. Of the East Indian climate, Sir Erskine Perry says, "The usage and opinion of the Hindoos so invades men of all castes and colors who deal with them that all take a Hindoo tint. Parsee, Mongol, Afghan, Israelite, Christian, have passed under this influence and have exchanged a good part of their patrimony, of their ideas, for the motions, manner of seeing, and habitual tone of Indian society. He compares it to a geological phenomenon which the black soil of the Dekkhan offers—the property, namely, of assimilating to itself every foreign substance introduced into its bosom.

How can we not believe, then, in influences of climate

and air, when, as true philosophers, we must believe that chemical atoms also have their spiritual cause why they are thus and not other; that carbon, oxygen, alum, iron, each has its origin in spiritual nature? Who lives one year in New England, ranges through all the climates of the globe. And if the character of the people has a larger range and a greater versatility, perhaps they may thank their climate of extremes, which at one season gives them the splendor of the equator and a touch of Syria, and then runs down to a cold which approaches the temperature of the celestial spaces.

It is not a country of luxury or of pictures; of snows rather, of east winds and changing skies, visited by icebergs, which, floating by, nip with their breath our blossoms; but wisdom is not found with those who dwell at their ease. Rather Nature when she adds brain adds difficulty.

I do not speak with any fondness, but the language of coldest history, when I say that Boston, the capital of the Fathers, which took its place on the cold, sandy shore on which they landed, commands attention as the town which was appointed in the destiny of nations to lead the civilization of North America. I have considered that city of New England an exceptional community, that there the extraordinary, abundant means provided by private bounty and public care, have enabled every poor man to secure to any talent in his child a good culture, and to the great multitudes of the middle classes a finished education, in its libraries and schools, scholarships and schools of design, and in the great sympathy of the community with any spiritual talent. What Vasari says three hundred years ago of the republican city of Florence might be said of Boston: "That the desire for glory and honor is powerfully generated by the air of that place in the men of

every profession, whereby all who possess talent are impelled to struggle that they may not remain in the same grade with those whom they perceive to be only men like themselves, and even though they may acknowledge such, indeed, to be masters; but all labor by every means to be foremost."

We find no less stimulus in our native air; not less ambition in our blood, which Puritanism has not sufficiently chastised; and at least an equal freedom in our laws and customs, with as many and as tempting rewards to toil; with so many philanthropies, humanities, charities soliciting us to be great and good.

A capital fact distinguishing this colony from all other colonies was that the persons composing it—the colony of Massachusetts into which the Plymouth colony was resolved—consented to come on the one condition that the charter should be transferred from the company in England to themselves, and so brought the government with them.

In sixty-eight years after its foundation Dr. Mather writes of it: "The town hath indeed three elder Sisters in this colony, but it hath wonderfully outgrown them all, and her mother, Old Boston in England, also. Yea, within a few years after the first settlement, it grew to be the metropolis of the whole English America."

The town of Boston has a history. It is not an accident. It is not a windmill, or a railroad station, or cross-roads tavern, or an army-barracks, grown up by time and luck to a place of wealth, but it is a seat of humanity, of men of principle obeying a sentiment and marching loyally whither that should lead them; so that its annals are great historical lines inextricably national, part of the history of political liberty.

How easy it is, after the city is built, to see where

it ought to stand. In our beautiful Bay, covered with sails from every port; with its islands hospitably shining in the sun; with its shores trending steadily from the two arms which the capes of Massachusetts stretch out to the sea down to the bottom of the Bay where the city domes and spires sparkle through the haze. But it took ten years to find this out.

There are always men ready for adventures—more in an over-governed, over-peopled country, where all the professions are crowded and all character suppressed, than elsewhere. This thirst for adventure, for war, for crusades, for gold-mines in a new country, speaks to the imagination, and offers free swing to the confined powers. There is always there and elsewhere a class of innovation and one of repose. In political economy all capital is new. The fruit of the last night or two is always that which is consumed to-day. Waste England, waste France, waste every city and every town, and in a year or two there is just as much wheat and hay as in the barns and fields before. It does not take some men long to build. Why, it is in the memory of all of us when the solid city of San Francisco went up like a peddler's booth at a muster, or a camp-tent in an army.

The planters in Massachusetts do not appear to have been hardy men; rather comfortable citizens, not at all accustomed to the rough task of discoverers, and they exaggerated their troubles. Bears and wolves were many, but early they believed and affirmed there were lions. Captain John Smith was near to death by being stung by the most poisonous tail of a fish called a sting-ray. In a journey of Rev. Peter Bulkeley and his company through the forest from Boston to Concord, they fainted from the powerful odor of sweet-fern in the sun, like what befell, still earlier, Biorn and Thor-

finn, Northmen, in their expedition to the same coast, who ate so many grapes from the wild vines that they were reeling drunk. The lions have never appeared since—nor before. Their crops suffered from pigeons and mice. Well, Nature has never again indulged in these exasperations. It seems to have been the last outrage ever committed by the sting-ray, the sweet-fern, or the fox-grape. They have been of peaceable behavior ever since. Every engineer or lumberman is accustomed to face more serious dangers than any enumerated, except the hostile Indians. But the awe was real and overpowering in the superstition with which every object was magnified. The dangers of the wilderness were unexplored, and, in that time, the terrors of witchcraft, terrors of evil spirits, and a certain idea of terror still clouded the idea of God in the mind of the purest.

The leaders, however, were educated, polite persons, men of mark and of good estate, and, still more, elevated by devout lives. As cloud on cloud, as snow on snow, as the bird on air, as the planet rests on space in its flight, so do the natures of men and their institutions rest on thoughts. The divine will descends into the barbarous mind in some strange disguise; its pure truth not to be guessed from the rude vizard under which it goes masquerading. The common eye cannot tell the bird by seeing the egg, nor distinguish the pure truth from the grotesque tenet which shields it. So these Englishmen, with the Middle Ages still obscuring their reason, were filled with Christian thought. They had a culture of their own. They were precisely the idealists of England—the most religious in a religious era. Who can read the fiery ejaculations of St. Augustine, a man of as clear sight as almost any other; of Thomas à Kempis, of Milton, of Bunyan even, without feeling

how rich and expansive a culture—not so much a culture as a higher life—they owe to the promptings of this sentiment? Who can read the pious diaries of Englishmen in the time of the Commonwealth and later, without a sigh that we write no diaries to-day? Who shall restore to us the odoriferous Sabbaths which made the earth and the humble roof a sanctuary? I trace to this religious sentiment and its culture, great and salutary results to the people of New England; first, namely, the culture of intellect which has been always found in the Calvinistic Church. It was these men who, five years after their landing in Boston, founded Harvard University. Many and rich are the fruits of that simple statute of the General Court of Massachusetts, "Ordered, to the end that learning may not be buried in the graves of our fathers, that every township, after the Lord hath increased them to fifty households, shall appoint one to teach all the children to read and write," and so forth; "and where any town shall increase to the number of a hundred families they shall set up a Grammar School, the masters thereof being able to instruct youth so far as they may be fitted for the University." The laborious, economical, rude and awkward population of New England, where is little elegance and no facility; with great accuracy in details, little spirit or knowledge of the world, always somewhat leaned to grace and elegance; you shall not infrequently meet that refinement which no education and no habit of society can bestow, which makes the elegance of wealth look stupid, and unites itself by a natural affinity to the highest minds of the world, nourishes itself on Plato and Dante, Michael Angelo and Milton; on whatever is pure and sublime in art,—and, I may say, gave hospitality in this country to the spirit of Cole-

ridge and Wordsworth, and to the music of Beethoven, before yet their genius had found a hearty welcome in Great Britain. It is the property of the religious sentiment to be the most refining of all influences. No external advantages, no good birth or breeding, no culture of the taste, no habit of command, no association with the elegant—even no depth of affection that does not rise to a religious sentiment can bestow that delicacy and grandeur of bearing which belong only to a mind accustomed to celestial conversation. All else is coarse and external, all else is tailoring and cosmetics beside this, for thoughts are expressed in every look or gesture. And these thoughts are as if angels had talked with the child. Michael Angelo said: "As from fire heat cannot be separated, neither can beauty from the eternal," and this sentiment gives a rich purpose to generous and manly schemes.

John Smith says that "thirty, forty or fifty sail went yearly to America, only to trade and fish, but nothing would be done for a plantation till about some hundred of your Brownists of England, Amsterdam and Leyden went to the new Plymouth, whose humorous ignorances caused them for more than a year to endure a wonderful deal of misery, with an infinite patience." The action of Endicott and Winthrop in securing a charter for Massachusetts shows as if they felt the danger which threatened the institutions of home. They wished to make a New England with the habits of youth. The great speed and success which distinguished the planting of the Massachusetts colony over any other in history, owe themselves to two considerations—namely, the subdivision of the State into small corporations of land and power, and the subdivision of power, each man forming part of that perfect structure growing out of the necessities of the occasion.

Instructed by necessity, each little company organized itself, after the pattern of the larger towns, by appointing its constable and half-military officers. In Massachusetts as early as 1633 the office of townsman or selectman appears first appointed by the General Court. In 1635 the Court says, "Whereas particular towns have many things which concern only themselves, it is Ordered, that the freemen of every town shall have power to dispose of their own lands and woods, and choose their particular officers." This pointed chiefly at the office of constable, but they soon chose their own selectmen and very early assessed taxes, a power at first resisted, but speedily confirmed to them.

It was on doubts concerning their own power that in 1634 a committee repaired to Governor Winthrop for counsel, and he advised, seeing the freemen were grown so numerous, to send deputies from every town once in a year to revise the laws and to assess all moneys; and the General Court, thus constituted, only needed to go into separate session from the Council, as they did in 1644, to become essentially the same assembly they are to-day. The governor conspires with the townsmen in limiting his claims to their obedience, and values much more their love than his chartered authority. The disputes between that forbearing man and the deputies are like the quarrels of girls, so much do they turn upon complaints of unkindness and end in such loving reconciliations. In a town-meeting the great secret of political science was uncovered and the problem solved how to give every individual his fair weight in the government without any disorder from numbers. In a town-meeting the roots of society were reached. Here the rich gave counsel, but the poor also, and, moreover, the just and the unjust. I had occasion some time since to look over with

much attention the whole series of Town Records in one interior town in Massachusetts, which happened to have had an important share in the early history of the colony. He is ill informed who expects, in running down the Town Records for two hundred years, to find a church of saints, a metropolis of patriots enacting wholesome and reasonable laws. The constitution of the towns forbid it. In this open democracy every opinion had utterance, every objection, every fact, every acre of land, every bushel of rye its just weight. The moderator was the passive mouthpiece, and the vote of the town, like the vane on the turret overhead, free for every wind to turn, and always turned by the last and strongest breath. In these assemblies the public weal, the call of interest, duty, religion were heard, and every local feeling, every private grudge, every suggestion of petulance and ignorance was not less faithfully produced. Wrath and love came to the town-meeting in company. In 1641 a law was passed that every man might introduce any business into the public meetings. The ill-spelled pages of the Town Records contain the results. I shall be excused for confessing that I have set a value upon every symptom of meanness and pique in those antique books, as proof that justice was done: that if the results of our history are approved as wise and good, it was yet a free strife; if the good counsel prevailed, the sneaking counsel did not fail to be suggested; and freedom and virtue, if they triumphed, triumphed in a fair field. And so be it an everlasting testimony and so much ground of assurance of man's capacity for self-government.

I esteem it the happiness of Boston that its settlers, while exploring their natural and granted rights and determining the power of the magistrate, were united by personal affection. Members of a church before



whose searching covenant all ranks were abolished, they stood in awe of each other as religious men. The cords of authority were there examined for their soundness. Governor Winthrop, in his speech to the people, tells them "that he had received gratuities from divers towns with much comfort and content; that he had also received many kindnesses from particular persons, which he would not refuse, lest he be accounted uncourteous, but he professed that he received them with a trembling heart in regard of God's rule and the consciousness of his own infirmity, and desired that they would not take it ill if he did refuse presents from private persons, except they were assistants or some special friends." He was told afterward that many good people were grieved at it, for that he had never any allowance towards the charge of his place. The ambition of power of that day had not the greediness of this. There was a great deal of labor, and there was no reward of money, but great risk of spending your own estate. In 1623 "it was enacted, by public consent of the freemen of New Plymouth, that if now or hereafter any man were elected to the office of Governor and would not stand to the election, nor hold nor execute the office for the year, that then he be amerced in twenty pounds sterling fine, to be levied out of the goods and chattels of the person so refusing. If any, elected to the office of Council, refused to hold the place, that then he be amerced in ten pounds sterling fine."

With all their love for his person, they took immense pleasure in turning out the Governor and Deputy and assistants, and in contravening the counsel of the clergy, when they urged, as John Cotton did, that they should make the Governor perpetual, and that they should make the office of the Assistant perpetual. A house in Boston

was worth as much again as a house as good in a town of timorous people, because here the neighbors would defend each other against bad governors and the troops. Quite naturally, house-rents rose in Boston. There never was wanting some thorn of dissent and innovation to prick the sides of conservatism in that town. I know that history contains many black lines of cruel injustice—the murder of Quakers, the murder of Miantonomoh (the Indian princess), the persecution of Wheelwright, and other acts of injustice, but the seed of prosperity was planted. It is the honorable distinction of that first colony of Plymouth, of the Pilgrims, not of the Puritans, that they did not persecute; that those same persons who were driven out of Massachusetts then were received in Plymouth. They did not banish the Quakers.

The seed of prosperity was planted. The people did not gather where they had not sown. They did not try to unlock the treasure of the world, except by honest keys of labor and skill. The Massachusetts colony grew and filled its own borders with a denser population than any other American State, all the while sending out colonies to every part of New England, then South and West until it has infused all the Union with its blood.

Boston is sometimes pushed into an attitude of theatrical virtue to which she is not entitled, and which she cannot keep; but the genius of the place is seen in her real independence, the productive power, and Northern acuteness of mind which is in nature hostile to oppression. America is growing like a cloud, towns on towns, States on States, and wealth, always interesting, since from wealth power cannot be divorced, is piled in every form invented for comfort and pride.

The State papers that have emanated from Boston,

from its Governor Winthrop down to its Governors Andrew and Claflin, have drawn admiration, while the decisions of its courts are respectable and respected. Literary ability was brought with us when we came, and it was never quite lost. Mather's "Magnalia," the first important book by a native in this country, has a vitality still which makes it entertaining reading. Benjamin Franklin knew how to write, and John Adams also. The Fourth of July orations I give up to the compliments of the official bodies who heard them, and the American sermons before the days of Channing I leave to those who heard them. I confess I do not find in our people, with all their education, a fair share of originality of thought, not any remarkable book of wisdom, not any broad generalization, any equal power of imagination. Nature is a frugal mother, and never gives without measure. When she has work to do she qualifies men for that and sends them equipped for that. In Massachusetts she did not want epic poems and dramas yet, but first, planters of towns and fellers of the forest, builders of mills and forges, builders of roads, and farmers to till and harvest corn for the world.

Boston never wanted a good principle of rebellion in it from its planting until now; there is always a minority unconvinced; always a heresiarch whom the governor and deputies labor with but cannot silence; some new light, some new doctrinaire who makes an unnecessary ado to establish his dogma; some Wheelwright or defender of Wheelwright; some protester against the cruelty of the magistrates to the Quakers; some tender minister hospitable to Whitefield against the counsel of all the ministers; some John Adams and Josiah Quincy and Governor Andrew to undertake and carry the defense of patriots in the courts against the

uproar of all the Province; some defender of the slave against the politician and the merchant; some champion of first principles of humanity against the rich and luxurious; some adversary of the death penalty; some pleader for peace; some noble protestant who will not stoop to infamy when all are gone mad, but will stand for liberty and justice if alone, until all come back to him.[1]

I fear to confine your attention too long to the annals of this town, though I am presuming on the presence of the friends of New England, and therefore, such details are not impertinent; but we will say that never country had such a fortune, as men call fortune, as this of ours in its geography, its history, and the advantage which the American has over all other nations. Well, one of them is his domain. Great country expands our views of men and things. Room it gives for wide variety of talents. America is England seen through a magnifying glass. There can be no famine in a country reaching through so many degrees of latitude as ours; no want that cannot be supplied. European critics regret the detachment of the Puritans to this country without aristocracy, which a little reminds one of the pity of the Swiss mountaineers, who said, when shown a handsome Englishman, "What a pity he has no *goitre!*" The future historian will record the detachment of the Puritans without aristocracy the supreme fortune of the colony, and as great a gain to mankind as the opening of this Continent. For what principally characterizes America is the nobility of her institutions. It is the perpetual insurrection which is the quality which secures their continu-

[1] The original of the following pages is for the most part lost, and the newspaper report, evidently faulty, had to be reproduced.

ity, and rectifies all errors by perpetual appeals to the people. England has a great deal of cheap wit upon America. She dislikes our manners, gives us kind counsel, and is often quite right in her criticisms; we make the same ourselves. But is this the real opinion of England which we read in the London *Times*, *Punch* and other journals? I think not. I rather choose to read British opinions in this—in the immense emigration of English people to these shores, the immense commerce that is carried on between London and New York, the immense investment of British capital in this country. The American sits secure in the possession of his vast domain, sees its inevitable force unlocking itself in elemental order day by day and year by year, looks from his coal-fields, his wheat-bearing prairies, his gold-mines, to his two oceans on either side, regards with security not only the annexation of English colonies, but the annexation of England. England has long been the cashier of the world, but the English merchant must soon pass from India by the Pacific Railroad and must make his exchanges in New York. This is but a type of many other changes. We read without pain what they say to the advantage of England and to the disadvantage of America, for are we not the heir?

"Percy is but my factor, good my lord."

England has made herself the founder of her colonies—educating the native population in good schools, putting them in good employment, aiming to put them in a condition to attend to their own affairs. Colonies have grown to empires, and then, with her full consent, have been released from her legislative authority. England should say, "Go; I have given you English equality, English laws, manners and customs; de-Ang-

licize yourselves if you can." When we see for ourselves that her own foreign interest is to assure herself at all time of the friendly relations of America, which is one with her by speech, by religious equality and by equal civilization, in all the dangers which are likely to threaten her from other nations, America is sure to sympathize with her, and extend a protection as noble to bestow as to receive. In estimating nations, it is well to consider the nature that is underneath; thus in England it is well to consider what criticism we can make. There are noble men there, yet all thoughtful men know that the force of that race may still any day turn out a better man than any now there. England has a higher school, has more writers, but we read out of her books; she has a better poet. They have a better blow-pipe there, but we have a continent full of coal. England has six points of Chartism; let us see what they are: Universal suffrage, vote by ballot, paid legislation, annual Parliament, equality of electoral districts, no property qualifications. They have all been granted here. England has still a load to carry. We began with this freedom, and are defended from shocks for the future by the celerity with which every measure of reform can instantly be carried.

I have detained you too long. History teaches by experiment—this which we study to-day is one of the best experiments by the smallness of the means and the largeness of the results. The little colony of Plymouth since 1792 has merged itself in the Colony—not long after State—of Massachusetts, and is represented by Boston, in which her sons have adorned and prospered the State. That little representative town has grown to a census of 270,000 souls. She has her large share of emigration, yet can only prosper by adhering her faith, to the moral power of the forefathers

of her State. The other cities into which she has sent her sons have almost outgrown the little town from which they departed. In your strict relations to that city, I know you will join me in the hope that every child that is born of her and every child of her adoption will keep her name as clean as the sun, and in distant years the motto on her shield, *Sicut patribus, sit Deus vobiscum,* shall be the prayer of millions in all the lands into which our children have emigrated. May they always say, "As with our Fathers, so God be with us"—*Sicut patribus, sit Deus vobiscum.*

RESPONSE

YOU are very prodigal in your goodness, Mr. President, but my duties for last night were prevented, and I had not been instructed that I was to answer to any such remarkable compliments to-night. I feel the dignity and beauty of the occasion, and rejoice very much in the noble and generous words that have been spoken, certainly by yourself and the representatives of the Navy Department from Washington. These high tributes to New England history and genius I rejoice in. They are noble, and I have a feeling that the audience around me, of New England men, New England-born or New England-descended, recognized the literal truth of whatever statements have been made. I have perhaps an inordinate appreciation of the value of New England history, and perhaps exaggerate the influence which that history has had and shall have in the world, but certainly I have not been contradicted in my sentiment by anything that has been uttered here to-night. You will think I am a little "green," perhaps, but I accept it all as literally true; indeed I think we have much more to claim and much more to affirm than anything you have yet heard. I fully believe that the remarkable history of the fathers of New England is not yet, with all our appreciation of that colony, held at its full claim, and I trust that we shall never be false to our estimate thereof. I know

very well the part which comedy, which satire, which the poets and romancers have played in that history, and that much of it is become a Punch picture and ridiculous, which was, in its origin and in its act, real, true and great, and I am quite willing to indulge the present generation in any underestimate which they may hold.

At the same time, I am quite free to believe that there was an excess of a certain enthusiasm in that settlement; that there were many individualities, I may say, carried to an extreme; that there were many prosecutions which we regret; that there were many prosecutions which cannot be defended; but that the spirit of liberty, that the spirit of justice, that the power of progress existed then and has not ceased to effect its logical consequences in this country and throughout this country. I also firmly believe that we are indebted to the sanctity of the men who founded the Plymouth Colony, and of the milder class of gentlemen who formed the colony of Boston; and that this whole country is indebted to them for the establishment of the right principles of the existing American Constitution is my firm belief, and is the reason for my accepting, sir, your invitation to come to this festival.

I have no right, to be sure, to pass your limitation of five minutes for each respondent, but I perhaps have some hereditary right to speak for Plymouth, being the descendant of a very early Pilgrim, myself the seventh in a series of clergymen descended from the founder of a colony that went to Concord, Massachusetts; I have indeed to say for them that their virtues were sometimes pushed to excess; we know them as Puritans, we know them sometimes as extremists, and perhaps modern philosophy has done something for benefit in its qualification of their extreme and severe views. I re-

member well, I might almost say it is a matter of family history to me, that in the old times if a man became rich he was disowned by all his relations. I have heard that people of that time of colonization were so good that when they were out in the huckleberry pastures they had to hold hard on the huckleberry bushes for fear they would be translated. They were enamoured of death instead of life. They preferred to ride on a horse to riding in a carriage. Perhaps they carried their virtues a little into extremes, but I wish to confirm all that I have heard from the eloquent gentleman from Pennsylvania and all that was seriously said by our esteemed president on this occasion, and, gentlemen, I will relieve you.

ORATION

GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS

1885

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GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS

(1824-1892)

JUNE 6, 1885, the society unveiled in Central Park a statue, "The Puritan," by Mr. J. Q. A. Ward. It stands on a rise, looking on the East Drive. The orator chosen for this day was Mr. Curtis, then editor of "Harper's Weekly," and in the midst of his long warfare in behalf of civil-service reform. The "Howadji" books, "Potiphar Papers," "Prue and I," and "Lotus-Eating" had made him well known before 1857. He began his career in New York, in 1851, with the "Tribune." Later he was connected with "Putnam's Monthly," and in 1858 he commenced the series of essays in "Harper's Magazine" that, under the name of the "Easy Chair," ran with never-ceasing charm and brilliancy for over thirty years.

ORATION

TO-DAY and here, we, who are children of New England, have but one thought, the Puritan; one pride and joy, the Puritan story. That transcendent story, in its larger relations, involving the whole modern development and diffusion and organization of English liberty, touched into romance by the glowing imagination, is proudly repeated by every successive generation of the English-speaking race, and lives and breathes and burns in legend and in song. In its greatest incident, the Pilgrim emigration to America, it is a story of achievement unparalleled in the annals of the world for the majesty of its purpose and the poverty of its means, the weakness of the beginning and the grandeur of the result. Contemplating the unnoted and hasty flight by night of a few Englishmen from the lonely coast of Lincolnshire to Holland, —the peaceful life in exile,—the perilous ocean-voyage afterward, lest in that friendly land the fervor of the true faith should fail,—the frail settlement at Plymouth, a shred of the most intense and tenacious life in Europe floating over the sea and clinging to the bleak edge of America, harassed by Indians, beset by beasts, by disease, by exposure, by death in every form, beyond civilization and succor, beyond the knowledge or interest of mankind, a thin, thin thread of the Old

World by which incalculable destinies of the New World hung, yet taking such vital hold that it swiftly overspreads and dominates a continent covered to-day with a population more industrious, more intelligent, happier, man for man, than any people upon which the sun ever shone—contemplating this spectacle, our exulting hearts break into the language which was most familiar to the lips of the Pilgrims,—a pæan of triumph, a proud prophecy accomplished,—"The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose." "A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation."

Here, indeed, we are far from the scenes most familiar to the eyes of the Pilgrims; we are surrounded by other traditions and solicited by other memories. But under these radiant heavens, amid this abounding beauty of summer, our hearts go backward to a winter day. The roaring city sinks to a silent wilderness. These flower-fringed lawns become a barren shore. This animated throng, changed to a grave-faced group in sombre garb, scans wistfully the solitary waste. The contrast is complete. All, all is changed.—But no, not all. Unchanged as the eternal sky above us is the moral law which they revered. Unfailing as the sure succession of the seasons is its operation in the affairs of men. All the prosperity, the power, the permanence of the republic,—more than ever the pride of its children, more than ever the hope of mankind,—rests upon obedience to that unchanged and unchangeable law. The essence of the Fathers' faith is still the elixir of the children's life; and should that faith decay, should the consciousness of a divine energy underlying human society, manifested in just and equal laws, and humanely ordering individual relations, disappear, —the murmur of the ocean rising and falling upon

Plymouth Rock would be the endless lament of nature over the baffled hopes of man.

Undoubtedly, New England in all its aspects of scenery and people, in its history and achievement, its energy, intelligence, sagacity, industry, and thrift,—New England of the church, the school, and the town meeting, is still the great, peculiar monument of the Puritan in America. But where beyond its borders more fitly than here, upon this ground settled by children of the hospitable country which was the first refuge of the Puritan, could a memorial statue stand? In England "they had heard that in the Low Countries was freedom of worship for all men," and thither the Pilgrims first fled; and when from that pleasant haven they resolved to cross the sea, they brought with them from Holland the free church and the free school, and unconsciously, in their principles and the practice of their religious organization, the free state. They were urged by a trading company in Amsterdam to settle under Dutch protection here in New Netherlands. But yet, although they courteously declined, when after sixty-four days' tossing upon the ocean they saw the desolate sands of Cape Cod, they resolved to stand toward the south, "to find some place about the Hudson River for their habitation." They turned again, however, to the bleaker shore. The Fathers did not come. But long afterward the children came, and are continually coming, to renew the ancient friendship.

Well may the statue of the Puritan stand here, for in the mighty miracle of the scene around us his hand, too, has wrought. Here upon this teeming island the children of New Netherlands and of New England have together built the metropolis of the continent, the far-shining monument of their united energy, enterprise, and skill. Together at the head of yonder river, richer

in romance and legend than any American stream, the Puritan and the Hollander with their associate colonists meditated the American Union. Together in this city, in the Stamp-Act Congress, they defied the power of Great Britain; and once more, upon the Hudson, the Puritan and the Cavalier and the Hollander, born again as Americans, resistlessly enveloped and overwhelmed the army of Burgoyne, and in his surrender beheld the end of British authority in the Colonies. Here, then, shall the statue stand, imperishable memorial of imperishable friendship; blending the heroic memories of two worlds and two epochs, the soldier of the Netherlands, the soldier of old England and the soldier of New England, at different times and under different conditions, but with the same unconquerable enthusiasm and courage, battling for liberty.

The spirit which is personified in this statue had never a completer expression than in the Puritan, but it is far older than he. Beyond Plymouth and Leyden,—beyond the manor-house of Scrooby and the dim shore of the Humber,—before Wickliffe and the German reformers,—on heaven-kissing pastures of the everlasting Alps,—on the bright shores of the Medicean Arno, —in the Roman forum,—in the golden day of Athens of the violet crown,—wherever the human heart has beat for liberty and the human consciousness has vaguely quickened with its divine birthright,—wherever the instinct of freedom challenges authority and demands the reason no less than the poetry of tradition —there, there, whatever the age, whatever the country, the man, the costume, there is the invincible spirit of the Puritan.

But the vague and general aspiration for liberty took the distinctive form of historical Puritanism only with the Reformation in the sixteenth century. Forerun-

ners, indeed, harbingers of the general awakening, there had been long before Luther, scattered voices as of early-wakening birds in the summer night preluding the full choir of day. The cry of all, the universal cry that rang across Europe from Wickliffe to Savonarola, from John Huss and Jerome of Prague to Zwingli and Erasmus, from the Alpine glaciers to the fiords of Norway, and which broke at last like a thunder clap from the lips of Martin Luther and shook the ancient ecclesiastical system to its foundations, was the demand for reform. To reform in the language of that great century meant to purify, and the Reformation was identical with Purification, with Puritanism.

But the spiritual usurpation intolerable in a pope was insufferable in a king. Henry the Eighth would have made England a newer Rome; and Edmund Burke's stately phrase, studied from the aspect of a milder time, was justified in all its terrible significance in Elizabethan England. The English hierarchy raised its mitred front in Court and Parliament, demanding unquestioning acquiescence and submission. But the conviction that had challenged Rome did not quail: and the spirit of hostility to the English as to the Roman dogma of spiritual supremacy, the unconscious protector of that religious, political, and civil liberty which is the great boon of England to the world, a boon and a glory beyond that of Shakespeare, of Bacon, of Raleigh, of Gresham, of Newton, of Watts, beyond that of all her lofty literature, her endless enterprise, her inventive genius, her material prosperity, her boundless empire, was Puritanism.

If ever England had an heroic age, it was that which began by supporting the Tudor in his rupture with Rome, then asserted his own logical principle against his daughter's claim, and after a tremendous contest

ended by seeing the last of the Stuart kings exiled forever, an impotent pensioner of France. This was the age of Puritan England, the England in which liberty finally organized itself in constitutional forms so flexible and enduring that for nearly two centuries the internal peace of the kingdom, however threatened and alarmed, has never been broken. The modern England that we know is the England of the Puritan enlarged, liberalized, graced, adorned—the England which, despite all estrangement and jealousy and misunderstanding, despite the alienation of the Revolution and of the second war, the buzz of cockney gnats, and official indifference in our fierce civil conflict, is still the mother-country of our distinctive America, the mother of our language and its literature, of our characteristic national impulse and of the great muniments of our individual liberty. To what land upon the globe beyond his own shall the countryman of Washington turn with pride and enthusiasm and sympathy, if not to the land of John Selden and John Hampden and John Milton; and what realm shall touch so deeply the heart of the fellow-citizen of Abraham Lincoln as that whose soil, and long before our own, was too sacred for the footstep of a slave? She is not the mother of dead empires, but of the greatest political descendant that ever the world knew. Our own revolution was the defence of England against herself. She has sins enough to answer for. But while Greece gave us art and Rome gave us law, in the very blood that beats in our hearts and throbs along our veins England gave us liberty.

We must not think of Puritanism as mere acrid defiance and sanctimonious sectarianism, nor of the Puritans as a band of ignorant and half-crazy zealots. Yet mainly from the vindictive caricature of a voluptuous

court and a servile age is derived the popular conception of the Puritan. He was only slandered by Ben Jonson's Tribulation Wholesome and Zeal-of-the-land Busy. The Puritan of whom Macaulay, following Hume, said that he hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectator, was the Puritan of the plays of Charles the Second, when Shakespeare had been replaced by Aphra Behn, and the object of the acted drama was to stimulate a passion palled by excess and a taste brutalized by debauchery. The literature that travestied the Puritan sprang from the same impotent hate which scattered the ashes of Wickliffe upon the Severn and disinterred the dead Cromwell and hung the body in chains at Tyburn, insulting the dust of the hero who living had made England great, and to whose policy, after the effeminate and treacherous Stuart reaction, England returned. The Cavaliers ridiculed the Puritan as Burgoyne and the idle British officers in Boston burlesqued the Yankee patriot. They had their laugh, their jest, their gibe. But it is not to the rollicking masqueraders of the British barracks, to the scarlet soldiers of the crown, that we look to see the living picture of our Washington and Hamilton, our Jay and Adams, who plucked from the crown its brightest gem. It is not the futile ribaldry of fops and fribbles, of courtiers and courtesans, of religious slavery and political despotism, whose fatal spell over England the Puritan had broken forever, which can truly portray the Puritan.

When Elizabeth died, the country gentlemen, the great traders in the towns, the sturdy steadfast middle class, the class from which English character and strength have sprung, were chiefly Puritans. Puritans taught in the universities and sat on the thrones of

bishops. They were Peers in Parliament, they were Ambassadors and Secretaries of State. Hutchinson, graced with every accomplishment of the English gentleman, was a Puritan. Sir Henry Vane, by whose side sat justice, was a Puritan. John Hampden, purest of patriots, was a Puritan. John Pym, greatest of Parliamentary leaders, was a Puritan.—A fanatic? Yes, in the high sense of unchangeable fidelity to a sublime idea;—a fanatic like Columbus sure of a western passage to India over a mysterious ocean which no mariner had ever sailed;—a fanatic like Galileo who marked the courses of the stars and saw, despite the jargon of authority, that still the earth moved;—a fanatic like Joseph Warren whom the glory of patriotism transfigures upon Bunker Hill. This was the fanatic who read the Bible to the English people and quickened English life with the fire of the primeval faith; who smote the Spaniard and swept the pirates from the sea, and rode with Cromwell and the Ironsides, praising God; who to the utmost shores of the Mediterranean, and in the shuddering valleys of Piedmont, to every religious oppressor and foe of England made the name of England terrible. This was the fanatic, soft as sunshine in the young Milton, blasting in Cromwell as the thunder-bolt, in Endicott austere as Calvin, in Roger Williams benign as Melanchthon, in John Robinson foreseeing more truth to break forth from God's word. In all history do you see a nobler figure? Forth from the morning of Greece, come, Leonidas, with your bravest of the brave,—in the rapt city plead, Demosthenes, your country's cause,—pluck, Gracchus, from aristocratic Rome its crown; speak, Cicero, your magic word; lift, Cato, your admonishing hand,—and you, patriots of modern Europe, be all gratefully remembered;—but where in the earlier ages, in the later

day, in lands remote or near, shall we find loftier self-sacrifice, more unstained devotion to worthier ends, issuing in happier results to the highest interests of man, than in the English Puritan?

He apprehended his own principle, indeed, often blindly, often narrowly, never in its utmost amplitude and splendor. The historic Puritan was a man of the seventeenth century, not of the nineteenth. He saw through a glass darkly, but he saw. The acorn is not yet the oak, the well-spring is not yet the river. But as the harvest is folded in the seed, so the largest freedom political and religious,—liberty, not toleration, not permission, not endurance—in yonder heaven Cassiopeia does not tolerate Arcturus nor the clustered Pleiades permit Orion to shine—the right of absolute individual liberty, subject only to the equal right of others, is the ripened fruit of the Puritan principle.

It is this fact, none the less majestic because he was unconscious of it, which invests the emigration of the Puritan to this country with a dignity and grandeur that belong to no other colonization. In unfurling his sail for that momentous voyage he was impelled by no passion of discovery, no greed of trade, no purpose of conquest. He was the most practical, the least romantic of men, but he was allured by no vision of worldly success. The winds that blew the Mayflower over the sea were not more truly airs from heaven than the moral impulse and moral heroism which inspired her voyage. Sebastian Cabot, Sir Walter Raleigh, Francis Drake and Frobisher, Cortez and Ponce de Leon, Champlain, bearing southward from the St. Lawrence the lilies of France, Henry Hudson pressing northward from Sandy Hook with the flag of Holland, sought mines of gold, a profitable trade, the fountain of youth, colonial empire, the north-western passage, a

shorter channel to Cathay. But the Puritan obeyed solely the highest of all human motives. He dared all that men have ever dared, seeking only freedom to worship God. Had the story of the Puritan ended with the landing upon Plymouth Rock,—had the rigors of that first winter which swept away half of the Pilgrims obliterated every trace of the settlement,—had the unnoted Mayflower sunk at sea,—still the Puritan story would have been one of the noblest in the annals of the human race. But it was happily developed into larger results, and the Puritan, changed with the changing time, adding sweetness to strength, and a broader humanity to moral conviction and religious earnestness, was reserved for a grander destiny.

The Puritan came to America seeking freedom to worship God. He meant only freedom to worship God in his own way, not in the Quaker way, not in the Baptist way, not in the Church of England way. But the seed that he brought was immortal. His purpose was to feed with it his own barnyard fowl, but it quickened into an illimitable forest covering a continent with grateful shade, the home of every bird that flies. Freedom to worship God is universal freedom, a free state as well as a free church, and that was the inexorable but unconscious logic of Puritanism. Holding that the true rule of religious faith and worship was written in the Bible, and that every man must read and judge for himself, the Puritan conceived the church as a body of independent seekers and interpreters of the truth, dispensing with priests and priestly orders and functions; organizing itself and calling no man master. But this sense of equality before God and toward each other in the religious congregation, affecting and adjusting the highest and most eternal of all human relations, that of man to his Maker, applied itself instinc-

tively to the relation of man to man in human society, and thus popular government flowed out of the Reformation, and the Republic became the natural political expression of Puritanism.

See, also, how the course and circumstance of the Puritan story had confirmed this tendency. The earliest English reformers, flying from the fierce reaction of Mary, sought freedom in the immemorial abode of freedom, Switzerland, whose singing waterfalls and *ranz des vaches* echoing among peaks of eternal ice and shadowy valleys of gentleness and repose, murmured ever the story of Morgarten and Sempach, the oath of the men of Rütli, the daring of William Tell, the greater revolt of Zwingli. There was Geneva, the stern republic of the Reformation, and every Alpine canton was a republican community lifted high for all men to see, a light set upon a hill. How beautiful upon the mountains were the heralds of glad tidings! This vision of the free state lingered in the Puritan mind. It passed in tradition from sire to son, and the dwellers in Amsterdam and Leyden, maintaining a republican church, unconsciously became that republican state whose living beauty their fathers had beheld, and which they saw glorified, dimly and afar, in the old Alpine vision.

Banished, moreover, by the pitiless English persecution, the Puritans, exiles and poor in a foreign land, a colony in Holland before they were a colony in America, were compelled to self-government, to a common sympathy and support, to bearing one another's burdens; and so, by the stern experience of actual life, they were trained in the virtues most essential for the fulfilment of their august but unimagined destiny. The patriots of the Continental Congress seemed to Lord Chatham imposing beyond the law-givers of

Greece and Rome. The Constitutional Convention a hundred years ago was an assembly so wise that its accomplished work is reverently received by continuous generations, as the children of Israel received the tables of the law which Moses brought down from the Holy Mount. Happy, thrice happy the people which to such scenes in their history can add the simple grandeur of the spectacle in the cabin of the Mayflower, the Puritans signing the compact which was but the formal expression of the government that voluntarily they had established—the scene which makes Plymouth Rock a stepping-stone from the freedom of the solitary Alps and the disputed liberties of England to the fully developed constitutional and well-ordered republic of the United States.

The history of colonial New England and of New England in the Union is the story of the influence of the Puritan in America. That is a theme too alluring to neglect, too vast to be attempted now. But even in passing I must not urge a claim too broad. Even in the pride of this hour, and with the consent of your approving conviction and sympathy, I must not proclaim that the republic like a conquering goddess sprang from the head fully armed, and that the head was New England. Yet the imperial commonwealth of which we are citizens, and every sister-State, will agree that in the two great periods of our history, the colonial epoch and that of the national union, the influence of New England has not been the least of all influences in the formative and achieving processes toward the great and common result. The fondly cherished tradition of Hadley may be doubted and disproved, but like the legends of the old mythology it will live on, glowing and palpitating with essential truth. It may be that we must surrender the story of

the villagers upon the Connecticut sorely beset by Indians at mid-day and about to yield; perhaps no actual, venerable form appears with flowing hair,—like that white plume of conquering Navarre,—and with martial mien and voice of command rallies the despairing band, cheering them on to victory, then vanishing in air. The heroic legend may be a fable, but none the less it is the Puritan who marches in the van of our characteristic history, it is the subtle and penetrating influence of New England which has been felt in every part of our national life, as the cool wind blowing from her pine-clad mountains breathes a loftier inspiration, a health more vigorous, a fresher impulse, upon her own green valleys and happy fields.

See how she has diffused her population. Like the old statues of the Danube and the Nile, figures reclining upon a reedy shore and from exhaustless urns pouring water which flows abroad in a thousand streams of benediction, so has New England sent forth her children. Following the sun westward, across the Hudson and the Mohawk and the Susquehanna, over the Alleghanies into the valley of the Mississippi, over the Sierra Nevada to the Pacific Ocean, the endless procession from New England has moved for a century, bearing everywhere Puritan principle, Puritan enterprise, and Puritan thrift. A hundred years ago New-Englanders passed beyond the calm Dutch Arcadia upon the Mohawk, and striking into the primeval forest of the ancient Iroquois domain began the settlement of central New York. A little later, upon the Genesee, settlers from Maryland and Pennsylvania met, but the pioneers from New England took the firmest hold and left the deepest and most permanent impression. A hundred years ago there was no white settlement in Ohio. But in 1789 the seed of Ohio was

carried from Massachusetts, and from the loins of the great eastern commonwealth sprang the first great commonwealth of the West. Early in the century a score of settlements beyond the Alleghanies bore the name of Salem, the spot where first in America the Puritans of Massachusetts Bay set foot; and in the dawn of the Revolution the hunters in the remote valley of the Elkhorn, hearing the news of the 19th of April, called their camp Lexington, and thus, in the response of their heroic sympathy, the Puritan of New England named the early capital of Kentucky. But happier still, while yet the great region of the Northwest lay in primeval wilderness awaiting the creative touch that should lift it into civilization, it was the Puritan instinct which fulfilled the aspiration of Jefferson, and by the Ordinance of 1787 consecrated the Northwest to freedom. So in the civilization of the country has New England been a pioneer, and so deeply upon American life and institutions has the genius of New England impressed itself, that in the great Civil War the peculiar name of the New-Englander, the Yankee, became the distinguishing title of the soldier of the Union; the national cause was the Yankee cause; and a son of the West, born in Kentucky and a citizen of Illinois, who had never seen New England twice in his life, became the chief representative Yankee, and with his hand, strong with the will of the people, the Puritan principle of liberty and equal rights broke the chains of a race. New England characteristics have become national qualities. The blood of New England flows with energizing, modifying, progressive power in the veins of every State; and the undaunted spirit of the Puritan, *sic semper tyrannis*, animates the continent from sea to sea.

I have mentioned the two cardinal periods of our his-

tory, the colonial epoch and the epoch of the Union. In all exclusively material aspects our colonial annals are perhaps singularly barren of the interest which makes history attractive. Straggling and desultory Indian warfare,—the transformation of wild forest land to fertile fields,—marches to the frontier to repel the French,—the establishment of peaceful industries, —the opening of prosperous trade,—a vast contest with nature, and incessant devotion to material circumstance and condition, but with no soft and humanizing light of native literature shining upon the hard life, no refining art, no great controversies of statesmanship in which the genius of the English-speaking race delights, —these, with a rigid and sombre theology overshadowing all, compose the colonial story. Yet the colonial epoch was the heroic period of our annals. For beneath all these earnest and engrossing activities of colonial life, its unwasting central fire was the sensitive jealousy of the constant encroachment of the home government against which the Puritan instinct and the Puritan practice furnished the impregnable defence. The free church, the free school, the town meeting, institutions of a community which not only loves liberty but comprehends the conditions under which liberty ceases to be merely the aspiration of hope, and becomes an actual possession and an organized power,— these were the practical schools of American independence, and these were the distinctive institutions of New England. Without the training of such institutions successful colonial resistance would have been impossible, but without New England this training would not have been.

Nay, more; I can conceive that New England, planted by a hundred men who were selected by the heroic struggle for freedom of two hundred years,—

New England, of a homogeneous population and common religious faith, cherishing the proud tradition of her origin, and during the long virtual isolation from Europe of a hundred and forty years successfully governing herself, might, even alone, with sublime temerity and without the co-operation of other colonies, have defied the unjust mother-country, and with the unappalled devotion of the Swiss cantons which the early Puritans knew, and with all the instinct of a true national life, have sought its independence. This I can conceive. But the preliminary movement, the nascent sentiment of independence deepening into conviction and ripening into revolution, the assured consciousness of ability to cope with every circumstance and to command every event, that supreme, sovereign, absolute absorption and purpose which interpret the truth that "one with God is a majority,"—all this in colonial America without New England I cannot, at that time, conceive. I do not say, of course, that except for New England America would have remained always colonial and subject to Great Britain. Not that at all; but only this, that for every great movement of change and progress, of research and discovery, of protest and revolution, there must be a pioneer. Who supposes that except for Columbus the western continent would have remained hidden always and unknown to the eastern world? But who can doubt that except for the perpetual brooding vision which filled the soul of the Genoese and bound him fast to the mysterious quest, the awed Indians of San Salvador would not have seen the forerunner of civilization on that October morning four centuries ago, and that except for Columbus, America would not then have been discovered? So in the colonial epoch, doubtless the same general feeling prevailed through all the colonies, the same

great principles were cherished, the same motives stirred the united colonial heart. The cry was not Virginia nor Massachusetts, it was continental America. But none the less, on the transplanted sapling of the English oak that drew its sustenance from the common American soil, the one spot most sensitive, most swelling, from which the vigorous new growth was sure to spring, was Puritan New England.

In our second historical epoch, that of the Union, the essential controversy, under whatever plea and disguise, was that of the fundamental principle of free government with a social, political, and industrial system to which that principle was absolutely hostile. Tariffs, banks, fiscal schemes, internal policy, foreign policy, state sovereignty, the limitations of national authority,—these were the counters with which the momentous game was played. I speak to those in whose memories still echo the thunders and flash the lightnings of that awful tempest in the forum and the field. I accuse no section of the country. I arraign no party. I denounce no man. I speak of forces greater than men, forces deep as human nature, forces that make and unmake nations; that threw Hampden with the Parliament and Falkland with the king. It was a controversy whose first menace was heard in the first Congress, and which swelled constantly louder and more threatening to the end. A house divided against itself cannot stand, said the beloved patriot who was to be the national martyr of the strife. The conflict is irrepressible, answered the statesman who was to share with him the conduct of the country through the storm. Who could doubt that it was irrepressible who knew the American heart, but who could doubt also that it would be tremendous, appalling, unyielding, who knew the resources of the foe? American slavery was so

strong in tradition, in sentiment, in commercial interest, in political power, in constitutional theory, in the timidity of trade, in the passion for Union, in dogged and unreasoning sectional hatred; it so pleaded a religious sanction, the patriarchal relation, even a certain romance of childlike dependence and the extension of Christian grace to the heathen, that like an unassailable fortress upon heights inaccessible it frowned in gloomy sovereignty over a subject land.

There was but one force which could oppose the vast and accumulated power of slavery in this country, and that was the force which in other years and lands had withstood the consuming terrors of the hierarchy and the crushing despotism of the crown—the conscience of the people; a moral conviction so undaunted and uncompromising that endurance could not exhaust it, nor suffering nor wounds nor death appal. The great service of the Puritan in the second epoch was the appeal to this conscience which prepared it for the conflict. Its key-note was the immortal declaration of Garrison, in which the trumpet-voice of the spirit that has made New England rang out once more, clear and unmistakable, awaking at last the reluctant echoes of the continent: "I am in earnest; I will not equivocate, I will not excuse, I will not retreat a single inch, and I will be heard." There were other voices, indeed, voices everywhere, harmonious and historic voices, swelling the chorus; but chiefly from New England came the moral appeal, penetrating and persistent, disdaining political argument and party alliance—an appeal which, with all the ancient fervor of the Puritan faith, spurning every friendly remonstrance, every plea of prudence, every prophecy of disaster, and every form of obloquy and malignant enmity, urged upon every citizen the personal guilt of complicity with national wrong, and

by its divine logic inexorably forced parties to the true issue, moulding our politics anew; and when debate ended, the same spirit irradiated the embattled cause of the Union, of the national pride, of the honor of the flag, with the resistless glory of the old and eternal Puritan principle of human liberty and equal rights, in which our shame and our sorrow and our long sectional alienation were utterly consumed.

In the great drama of our history this was the distinctive part of New England in the separate colonies and in the later Union. Under another sky, in a different time, and amid changed conditions, it was the service of the same spirit that challenged the Vatican, shook the crowned majesty of the Tudor and the Stuart, and made straight in the desert a highway for republican liberty,—the spirit of the Lincolnshire fugitive, of the exile in Holland, of the Pilgrim of the Mayflower and his brethren of the Arbella; of the English Puritan, expanded, developed, matured into the American patriot. It is a spirit to be reverenced and cherished, and perpetuated, if it may be, in adequate and noble human form and so made permanently visible to men. We know, indeed, that the builders of memorial statues measure themselves; that they raise in enduring marble and in bronze imperishable, relentless censors of the lives of those who build them, and that no man shall stand unrebuked in the sculptured presence of departed greatness. But the power that rebukes inspires; and this statue shall stand not only as the memorial of our reverence for the Fathers, but as the pledge of the children's fidelity to the sublimity of their fathers' principle and the grandeur of their fathers' aim.

Here in this sylvan seclusion, amid the sunshine and the singing of birds, we raise the statue of the Puritan

Pilgrim, that in this changeless form the long procession of the generations which shall follow us may see what manner of man he was to the outward eye whom history and tradition have so often flouted and traduced, but who walked undismayed the solitary heights of duty and of everlasting service to mankind. Here let him stand, the soldier of a free church calmly defying the hierarchy, the builder of a free state serenely confronting the continent which he shall settle and subdue. The unspeaking lips shall chide our unworthiness, the lofty mien exalt our littleness, the unblenching eye invigorate our weakness; and the whole poised and firmly planted form reveal the unconquerable moral energy—the master-force of American civilization. So stood the sentinel on Sabbath morning guarding the plain house of prayer while wife and child and neighbor worshipped within. So mused the Pilgrim in the rapt sunset hour on the New England shore, his soul caught up into the dazzling vision of the future, beholding the glory of the nation that should be. And so may that nation stand forever and forever, the mighty guardian of human liberty, of God-like justice, of Christ-like brotherhood.

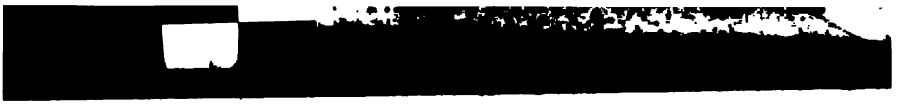














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